It's Only Certain Words

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It's Only Certain Words

by penvisions277

Summary

Will's slipping accent created a shift in his and Hannibal's relationship, but not everyone is accepting of it.

Notes

I'm not really sure how many of these I'm going to do. I know that there are a lot of words that I can use as chapters to create a whole story out of this, but I'm not too sure how many I want to do just yet. I'm only writing them as they come to me. If you would like to suggest any words that are typically pronounced wrong or weirdly in the South, go ahead and leave a prompt in the comments :)

Chapter 1

“You seem distracted, Will.”

Will looked up from his clasped hands, his eyes focusing on the form of Hannibal in the chair across from him. He was leaning forward in his own chair, feet planted firmly on the ground, and leaning forward with his elbows on his knees. He shook his head to focus his eyes more clearly before glancing into the eyes of the sincerely curious man in front of him.

“What? Oh, um, yeah, I am.”

Will spoke in a fragmented sentence, his mind still trying to come up with solutions to what had been bothering him for a few weeks. A heavy sigh fell from his lips as he leaned back in his seat. His back relaxed when it was no longer hunched and the proof could be seen in the small smile that flashed on his lips. Hannibal was silent across from him, knowing better than to coerce an answer out of Will when it was obvious the man would voice his issues in time. Hannibal’s patience paid off when a few moments later another sigh flew to the air.

“It’s just that….the damn things keep eating my plants.”

Hannibal let the slight confusion he was feeling appear on his face, he really had no idea what Will was talking about. Before the man had fallen silent they had been discussing one of the more minor cases Will had recently worked on. But now Will was going on about plants? It must be the garden he had been talking about during last week’s conversation. He had mentioned something about finally getting some fruit to eat so he didn’t have to buy it for a few months out of the year.

“Will, if there is anything I can do to help, rest assured. I can come home with you and we can sort this out.”

“I know what it is that keeps gettin’ them. It’s a matter of them eating the maters before I can even get my hands on them.”

Hannibal and Will both froze in their seats, Hannibal having reached over to adjust his unused pen atop the moleskin journal on the table beside him and Will having gone to stand up again. From his slightly hunched standing position, Hannibal could feel the man’s body heat closer than it had been when he was sitting. Will had suggested moving the chairs a fraction closer than they were for normal patients in light of their…shifting relationship.

Will felt the shift in the air just as Hannibal felt the flash of heat in his abdomen. It was always a delight to hear the younger man’s accent, he hadn’t been lying when he had said it was attractive. Will quickly gathered himself as Hannibal continued to set his pen in the exact spot it should be along the small elastic band that held the covers of the journal closed. Will was passing him when he reached out and tugged the arm he caught.

Will fell into the chair in a sideways position, his bottom landing in the older man’s lap while his feet hung over the arm closest to Hannibal’s left hand, his head the other. He turned

shocked eyes to culprit of his newfound position only to find a sly smile painted across the good doctor's lips.

"Can I help you?"

Will wasn't quite sure how to react to such an uncharacteristic action on the man's part. It was odd to think that Hannibal would willingly allow someone to rest in his lap, in the professional atmosphere of his office no less. The intimacy of Hannibal's action stirred a heat in Will's middle. He knew perfectly well, why Hannibal had pulled him. It happened every time he spoke and his accent managed to sneak through, Hannibal kissed him hard on the lips.

Will was already leaning forward despite the awkward position when Hannibal had lightly grasped his face and began to bring it towards his own. Their lips were hot against each other as they kissed. As soon as his lips had met Will's, Hannibal had shifted his hands to rest atop Will's chest. The fabric of his shirt did little to hide the soft skin that lied underneath.

A light groan fell from Will's lips as he parted his mouth, intent on deepening the kiss before their setting caught up with Hannibal. Will's hands began to grip the shoulders of Hannibal's suit jacket, to help him gain leverage as the man started to shift in Hannibal's lap. He ended up with a knee on either side of Hannibal's strong legs, his bottom resting directly on the man's lap, still clutching onto the jacket for dear life. When Will moved forward to delve his tongue deeper into the other man's mouth, Hannibal broke the kiss to moan out his satisfaction at the friction.

"Hah hah, is that what you wanted?"

Will managed to ask in between panting breaths. It was his turn to groan as Hannibal straightened from leaning back in the chair, causing their groins to press together in delicious heat. Hands were quickly removed to allow the older man to remove his suit jacket carefully. Hannibal folded it quickly before placing it on the small table beside him atop the journal and pen he had been trying to use as a distraction from what started this.

Once the jacket was out of the way, Hannibal roughly grabbed ahold of Will's hips and guided them down into his own. Will's head snapped back at the rough treatment and wonderful sensation of feeling Hannibal against him through his pants. A strangled moan fell from his lips as he reached out to take ahold of the shoulders of Hannibal's shirt. The good doctor scattered sucking kisses along his exposed neck along with the steady movement of bringing Will's hips down to meet his own, eliciting wanton moans from the man in question.

"Ah, hah, Hannibal."

Hannibal's steady movements and sucking kisses along his neck faltered when his name fell from Will's lips. When they had finally started to cook that meal a few weeks ago, Hannibal had insisted that Will addressed him by his first name. At first the empath had been shy about it, too unsure of himself and where he stood to use it on a regular basis. But after a few days the man no longer stuttered over the title doctor before remembering he was allowed to use Hannibal's first name. But this was the first instance where Will had moaned his name out in

the heat of passion. It had been the first instance he had the chance to, because he had shied away from physical contact as well, still too hesitant in the face of rejection.

Hannibal loosened his grip on the man's hips, though they still rocked against his, in favor of unfastening the top buttons of the man's plain shirt. Will moved his hands from Hannibal's shoulders to his neck in order to return the favor and unknot the tie from around it. Once the tie was loose enough, Will began to unbutton the light green dress shirt the man had worn under a dark brown waist coat and suit jacket. The moment each other's chests were exposed hands were roaming. The smooth expanse of Will's chest was just as lovely as Hannibal had imagined it to be. While Hannibal's slightly hairy, but groomed chest was thick and taut beneath Will's searching fingers.

The rustling sound of fabric could be heard throughout the room as the two men continued to grind against each other, too lost in the feel of the others body to realize that the door leading into the waiting room beyond had opened and closed. Will suddenly dove in for a kiss, causing their teeth to click together and a rather loud moan to fall from the older man's lips at the taste of blood that blossomed from a small knick that formed on Will's bottom lip.

There was a muffled cough from the waiting room, the culprit no doubt trying to convey that they were in fact within hearing distance of the main office. Will stilled before going ramrod straight, his hips pushing hard into Hannibals. His hands had gone still on the man's chest below him, too shocked at the fact that they had been caught. He wasn't sure whether to laugh at the hilarity of the situation or to shrink so small no one would ever see him again.

Hannibal let a small grin grace his features as he looked into Will's conflicted face. His smile brought out one of Will's own flashing smiles. Seeing that Will was no longer too frozen to act, Hannibal began to pull the flaps of his shirt together and began to button them with care, Once Will's shirt was once again closed, Hannibal felt his own being fixed back to the way it had been before. It was when Will's hands gripped the tie that he paused.

"I'm not very good with ties, Hannibal, maybe you should just take care of it."

He moved to get out of the man's lap, but Hannibal took a gentle hold of his jaw and brought his lips to connect with his once again. The kiss was chaste, a small reassurance that things weren't ruined despite having to stop. Will returned the light kiss, Hannibal feeling the small smile that decorated his soft lips.

"Do not worry, Will. I'm more than capable at fixing ties for the both of us."

"I can do them well enough," Will started again, standing up from the chair and running his hands down the front of his shirt to remove the wrinkles that had multiplied upon the fabric, "It's just that I'm not capable of doing the half Windsor knot you're so fond of."

Hannibal looked up from fixing his tie and picking his jacket up from the small table to find that Will had crossed the room over to the fainting couch where his bag laid waiting for him. He appeared to press his palm to the front of his pants before reaching down to retrieve it, no doubt trying to calm the state he had ended up in. The jacket was on and buttoned in a matter of seconds, Hannibal's overall presence magnifying within the spacious room.

“You are capable enough to know what type of knot my ties are fastened in, Will. That is, in itself, an accomplishment.”

“Yeah, I guess. Well, I’ve got to head home anyway. I should’ve left when my time was up, the dog’s needed feeding nearly a half hour ago.”

“Nonsense, Will. You are welcome to overstay your time any day. Today was a different matter, though. I forgot I had scheduled a single person after you, seeing as they will be away on vacation during our normal time next week.”

“Still, you’re a very busy man. I don’t want to steal all of your time.”

“It isn’t stealing if I give it to you, Will.”

Will haphazardly through his bag over his shoulder, ignoring the way that it bumped against his knee before stilling. He mumbled something as he adjusted his faded brown jacket over the red, blue, and white shirt he had on under it.

“I’ll see you on Sunday, right? You said something about wanting to help me get rid of my garden pest. I’ll make sure kitchen is stocked for whatever extravagant meal you’re going to shower me with.”

“Just make sure you have some basil on hand. We can make a pizza out of the tomatoes we save.”

Hannibal smiled as he crossed the room, placing his hand atop Will’s shoulder. The two walked over to the patient exit before Hannibal was pleasantly surprised to receive a departing kiss on the corner of his mouth. Before he could catch Will’s eye or even the side of his face, the man had rushed through the door and out of sight.

It was with a quiet sigh that Hannibal resigned himself to another hour of work before opening the door that lead into the waiting room and bid his next patient a good evening in greeting. He would have to wait a few days before he could see if Will had really grown out of his shyness.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Will surprises Hannibal with a visit to his office, but runs into one of Hannibal's more difficult patients.

Chapter Notes

A special thank you goes out to both Redsparkletea and ScorpioDream for the prompts behind this chapter.

Will was not happy, that much was obvious. He was sitting in the waiting room while Hannibal finished up with his last patient before his lunch hour. Will had walked into the room ready to lean back and relax in one of the comfortable chairs only to find another person seated in the room. The man was a little on the heavy side, he wore clothes that didn't seem to be within his comfort zone, and his gingery brown hair and beard were a little too groomed, if you asked Will.

It was with a startled little nod that Will had acknowledged the man's staring eyes before crossing the room and moving to the seat farthest away from the only other occupant. Will settled into the chair, placing his phone atop his clothed thigh. His father was supposed to call within the next hour to update Will on where he had been stationed next to work on boats. Last he had heard, his father had been moved to repair the boats around Lake Poinsett in Arkansas for a year or so.

The room was quiet save for the even breathing of both Will and the unknown man. Will was a little confused as to why the man would be here right before Hannibal normally took his break for lunch. Thinking he may have rushed through his meeting with Jack over a small case his minimal input was needed on, Will shook his sleeve back to check the time on his watch. It was set at nearly one o'clock. Will wasn't early, but then perhaps this man was late.

"I'm not here for an appointment with Dr. Lecter. I was actually going to deliver an invitation for a small get together I'm hosting next weekend."

Will nodded to show that he heard the man, though he didn't really want to speak. The man seemed to be the clingy type. No doubt a recipient of obsessive compulsive disorder from one of his parents. Will could feel the man look him up and down, appraising his appearance. Will had tried to clean up this morning, knowing he had a lecture to do, a meeting with Jack, and then a surprise lunch for Hannibal.

His hair had been a lost cause, the loose curls did whatever they wanted even if Will braced himself and deemed a situation fitting of gel or mouse. He had trimmed the scruff around his jawline though, so it wasn't as long as it was when he had been home for the last couple of days with his dogs and the left over remnants of his last encounter with Hannibal that had been on Tuesday. It was now Thursday, so Will had gone a few days without doing much of anything.

His dark green and brown plaid shirt was paired with a blazer made out of a slightly darker shade of khaki than was typical of the pants and shorts. A dark brown tie was fastened neatly around his neck, falling to compliment his flattened stomach, Will hadn't eaten too much on his few days off, opting to get as much sleep as possible instead. His pants were the same brown, he really did have a lot of brown in his wardrobe. He thought for a moment because dog hair wasn't as noticeable on it as it was on stark, black cloth and felt better about it.

Suddenly, his phone vibrated on his thigh. He stood with a small nod towards the man still appraising him before making his way over by the door that led into the hallway. He answered the call without even checking the ID, knowing it would be his father. Jack couldn't possibly want something so quickly from him.

"Hey, Dad."

"I wasn't sure if you were actually going to pick up, I thought you lectured all day?"

"I used to, but they put me back in the field."

"Do you like being back in the field, I remember that stabbing quite a few years back, doesn't it still affect you?"

"Yeah," Will sighed, feeling a twinge of pain reverberate from his right shoulder blade, "I still have some trouble with it, but for the most part it doesn't bother me. Where have you been stationed to next?"

"Around Lake Eerie, Will. I want you to come visit me there, we could spend a day or two camping and fishing like old times."

"It's hard for me to get time off work…with what I do. But I can try and manage a week off around fall."

"Oh good," Will could hear the smile that had blossomed on his father's face through his tone of voice. A small smile donned his own features at the thought. "You know I reckon I could invite my friend and his daughter. She's around the same age as you, Will. It would do you good to interact with her."

"Well, I wouldn't mind so much, Dad. But I uh-"

Will's response was cut off by the door leading into the waiting room being opened with a dull thud. He turned around to see Hannibal walking through the door with his coat hanging half folded over his left arm. The man's face lit up slightly as Will offered him a small wave

and smile, only to fall when the man in the chair closest to him cleared his throat. It was with a polite smile that Hannibal turned to the other man, his attention having been demanded.

“Hello, Franklin. It is such a surprise to see you here when we don’t have an appointment for another two weeks and you are presumably on vacation.”

The conversation shifted to the back of Will’s hearing as his father continued to call his name, hoping to gain his attention back. Will turned to keep an eye on the two men on the far side of the room and the door leading out of it in his peripheral sight.

“Will, are you busy?”

“I’m just waiting for a friend of mine to get off of work so we could go to lunch, Dad. I was trying to tell you before I was interru-“

“Oh a friend? Since when do you have friends? Is she a nice woman, Will?”

The subdued conversation between Hannibal and Franklin seemed to take a turn for the worst as Hannibal’s voice transitioned from pleasant to slightly stern. Will noticed the way that Franklin had removed an envelope from within his suit jacket and was now offering it to Hannibal.

“A woman? Uh, no. Dad, Hannibal is a guy.”

Franklin’s small rant stopped mid-sentence as he turned his attention to Will on the other side of the room. A remark was made about how ‘he’ could call him by Hannibal’s first name, while Franklin couldn't simply invite him to whatever he was hosting.

“Will?”

Will’s father’s simple question was asking more than for his attention. It was clear that his father was shocked at news his son was going out to lunch with a friend, that he even had a friend, and that most of all, his friend was a male. Will cradled his face in his palm, doing his best to ignore the glasses perched atop his nose in the process.

“I was fixin’ to tell ya’ dad, but we don’t talk all that much anymore.”

To his left, Will could see Hannibal stiffen slightly in his spot. The jacket draped over his arm swayed slightly at his movement, while Franklin motioned his arms towards Will in an exasperated manner. The thicker man’s face had a look of desperation tinted to the triumphant glee that had taken over his face. His voice was obnoxiously loud when he spoke next.

“See? He’s just some backwards hick that was probably sent to you because he drinks too much. His accent is degrading to listen to, I assure you that my intelligence is much higher than his. I can’t imagine why you would rather spend your time with him than me. I mean come on.”

Will froze as he realized Franklin was angrily speaking about him.

“Will, it sounds like your friend is upset, why don’t you just call me on Friday. We can talk more about this then. You know I love you no matter what, Will.”

The call ending beep was quick in his ear, with a sigh Will set his phone back in his pocket at turned to face the other side of the room fully. Hannibal’s presence was threatening, spreading throughout the room like a predatory musk. Franklin didn’t seem to grasp that he had offended the man in front of him with his quick judgment of Will. A few steps towards them, effectively shifted the atmosphere in the room.

“You are aware of, I’m hoping, that to pass judgment on others before getting to know them is the exact ignorance that you’re accusing me of having.”

Both Hannibal and Franklin turned to face him at his harsh words. The less than friendly tone Will had used when first meeting Hannibal a few months ago in that small room where the Minnesota Shirke’s victims had been plastered to a poster board was a quiet warning of underlying anger that reverberated throughout the entire room.

Hannibal’s eyes were guarded, that much Will could tell. It was no doubt due to the slip of his tongue when he had told his father he had been ‘fixin’ to’ tell him about Hannibal. Both of them know perfectly well the effect Will’s accent had on the good doctor, the instance of last time it had slipped flashed in Will’s mind. He carefully placed his hands in his pockets as he took a few more steps towards them, favoring the side of the room that Hannibal was on.

“I have an accent because I grew up in a cultured environment.”

“You call the South cultured? No wonder your clothes look so shabby, you probably live off of a minimum wage job and in a rundown house.”

“As a matter of fact,” Hannibal cut in, his voice stern. There was a slight warning tone to his voice as well, Will noticed with a slight shiver. “Will is a special agent for the FBI.”

“I both teach how to and actively capture the criminals that target ignorant people like you to murder.”

Franklin looked from Hannibal’s stern gaze to Will’s sarcastic smile. He noticed the way that Hannibal was slightly facing Will. A huff fell from the man’s lips as he took the now crumpled envelope in his hand and struggled to place it back inside the hidden pocket inside his suit jacket. He looked more than a little disappointed at this turn of events. He hadn’t expected his psychiatrist to already favor one of his patients. Least of all the scraggly man that was in front of him and couldn’t even look him in the eye.

“Well, if you would rather spend your time with this patient than who am I to interfere.”

“Will is not my patient. It is inappropriate to interact with patients on a personal level outside of this office, Franklin. We have been over this before. That is also the reason why I have denied your invitation. It would fall into the range that I don’t allow my morals into.”

Hannibal moved towards Will, placing his right hand securely atop the man’s left shoulder. Will shivered despite expecting the touch, but the possessiveness of the action stirred a flash

of heat in his middle. Hannibal turned to face Franklin completely, a small smile gracing his lips.

“I am here to remind you of and assist you in repairing your own problems, Franklin. Not those that concern me or my personal life. Now, if you don’t mind, I would like to enjoy the time I have off this afternoon with Will.”

Franklin’s attitude quickly shifted to the polite curiosity he had when Will had first walked into the waiting room. Though there was a dark glint in the back of his eyes that told both men he was far from done with this situation. He walked with a slight tremble that gave away his anger towards the door. As soon as it clicked closed behind him, Will turned to face the man beside him.

“What a pleasant surprise, Will. Though I must apologize for Franklin’s behavior, he tends to develop personal feelings for his therapists. I just happen to be the most recent recipient.”

“It’s alright. I deal with people like that all the time.”

Will shrugged, accidentally knocking Hannibal’s hand from his shoulder. He tossed an apologetic smile to the man before moving to roll his shoulders. They were sore from the drive over and then standing in front of thirty or so trainees that insisted on asking questions that didn’t need to be asked. To be honest, he was tired. The incident with Franklin not helping in the slightest, but he had decided to surprise Hannibal for a lunch outing.

“May I ask why you are here?”

“Jack called me in for a meeting after my morning lecture. I was in the city, so I figured why not ask you to go to lunch.”

“Lunch sounds impeccable, where did you have in mind?”

Taking that as the signal to start making their way out of the room Will began to cross the room. He mentioned he wasn’t sure what there was in the general vicinity as he did so, but when he opened the door he felt Hannibal’s close proximity, his body heat wafting into his back. The hand he had put on the handle of the door was covered with one of the older man’s, his hand reaching around to lock the door.

Before Will could turn to face the man, Hannibal pinned his front on the expanse of the door with his own. The slight bump that had formed through the front of his pants was obvious as he pressed it against Will’s backside. A heady gasp sounded in the air as Will could feel the heat spread to from that one spot to the whole of his body, stirring a reaction of his own. A quiet whimper fell from his lips as Hannibal pressed him further into the door, trapping Will’s arousal.

Hannibal’s left hand landed on Will’s shoulder as the man shifted his face so that his right cheek was pressed against the door as opposed to his forehead. His glasses were slightly askew due to the weird angel of his face.

“You know, I think there is a perfectly good meal in front of me.”

“O-oh yeah?”

Will’s voice was trembling in anticipation. He would be the first to admit that he was growing fond of the intimacy between him and the man pressing into him from behind.

“Mm, yes. You have a certain je ne sais quoi about you, Will.”

“Je ne sais quoi.”

Will’s accent caressed the phrase, stirring the heat that had taken residence in both of their middles. Before he could even register what was happening, Hannibal’s hands had snaked around to his front and dragged the jacket off of his form. It was thrown aside before the man began to work on the tie and the buttons of his shirt, Will quickly moved his hands to help un-tuck the fabric from the waistband of his brown pants. The room was suddenly stifling, Will realized, as his hands were directed to undo his belt by Hannibal’s before they disappeared behind him.

Hannibal unbuttoned his own shirt, intent on not being interrupted this time. His tie was loosened and his waistcoat followed the fabric of both his shirt and tie on the floor with Will’s discarded clothes. Hands were exploring the sculpted muscles of Will’s back, causing the man to moan. The sounds of Will’s pleasure hardened Hannibal even more, prompting him to wind and flatten his hands across Will’s chest. Will’s hands fell from where they were struggling to undo his belt.

Will shifted between his front and the door, causing his backside to rub deliciously against him. Suddenly, Hannibal’s hands were undoing the belt around Will’s waist. As soon as the belt was loose and the top button was undone, Hannibal’s hands delved into the front of his pants. The heat against his hand, Hannibal closed his eyes, palming the man in front of him through his boxers. Will’s hips jutted forward, a strangled groan sounding in his throat.

“Ah, hah. Nng.”

Will couldn’t help the wanton sounds falling from his lips, it had been so long since someone other than himself had pleasured him. It was a nice feeling, to experience that winding feeling in his stomach after not having done so in such intensity. It was as if he was a clumsy teenager again, pleasuring himself in the privacy of his room for the first time. A startled gasp caught in his throat as Hannibal’s hand slipped inside his boxers and took a hold of him. His hands splayed on the door in front of him, nails trying desperately to dig into the hard wood, turning white with the pressure.

“You make the loveliest sounds, Will.”

Hannibal’s voice was a purr in his ears, sending shivers down his spine. It was through the haze he had fallen into that Will realized Hannibal was unfastening his own belt and pants behind him as the pressure subsided. It was with regret that Hannibal removed his hand from around Will’s pulsating member, stalling the frantic movement of the man’s hips as he leaned heavily on the door in front of him, his neck and shoulders flushed as he panted. His glasses were fogged up because of his breath puffing out in an irregular and quick pace.

His knuckles were white where he braced himself against the door with his hands, the skin straining as he desperately tried to grasp at it. The rustling sound of Hannibal pushing his trousers down to bunch at his thighs echoed in Will's heated ears. Hannibal's thinly clothed member was hot against Will's bare backside. Hannibal had lowered Will's pants and boxers both before leaning into the man from behind. Will's arousal brushed against the cool wood in front of him, startling him and causing him to arch his back, pushing his backside firmly against Hannibal.

The older man let out a throaty moan, not expecting such a fierce reaction. He wound his hand around Wills bares hips, reveling in the way that the man's hip bones jutted out just the slightest bit that they did, and took ahold of his hot arousal. His smooth hands were like heaven to the younger man, he didn't care that he was being pressed into the door of the man's professional office so long as that hand continued to pump him. He shifted his hips forward, hoping to get Hannibal to increase his pace.

A grunt sounded in the air as Hannibal complied with Will's unspoken request. His other hand had latched onto the man's hip, trying to gain some leverage as he rocked himself against the younger man. Hannibal latched his mouth on the back of Will's neck, enjoying the increase of sounds that flitted into the air as he did so. He grazed his teeth along the curve of his neck and bit down softly on the strong shoulder as it moved to increase the friction between them.

Suddenly, the door underneath Will began to shake. He was quick to capture his bottom lip between his teeth to stop the sounds he was making. Hannibal noticed the sudden quiet in the previously loud room, he slowed his movements against the younger man. He moved his mouth near the man's ear to voice his confusion.

"What is it, Will?"

The knocking on the door was a quicker answer than the one Will had started to provide. A quiet growl rumbled in the older man's chest as he carefully pulled Will's boxers and pants back up around the man's hips, brushing his hands along his member one last time before removing his hands from him completely. Hannibal took a few steps back and quickly retrieved his shirt from the floor. As he redressed he watched Will compose himself before pushing from the door as well.

His chest was heaving as he tried to regain his breath, his classes were askew from when Hannibal had first pushed him into the door, and the front of his pants was tented with his obvious arousal. The younger man quickly retrieved his shirt from the floor and threw it on, his fingers trembling with the last vestiges of pleasure as he buttoned them and moved to fasten the tie back around his neck. Hannibal mirrored his actions, he took a hold of his jacket from the floor just as Will had done and within minutes the two of them were dressed.

Hannibal's arousal had dissipated enough to not show through the front of his pants, while Will's was a little more prominent. Deeming them presentable, Hannibal quietly unlocked the door before opening it to greet whoever had interrupted their rather heated exchange.

On the other side of the door was the neighborhood mail carrier, the same man that delivered along the block's string of professional offices.

“Good afternoon, Dr. Lecter. I’m sorry to be so late with the delivery today. One of you letters was being held up.”

“It is quite alright. I was just on my way out so it would have been waiting for me as it usually is when I return from lunch.”

“Still, an apology is in order. Here is your mail. Have a good day, Dr. Lecter.”

The man bid them a farewell before disappearing down the hall and through the door that lead outside to the front. Hannibal calmly looked through the adressees of each letter while planning on what to make with the mail carriers liver, lungs, and kidneys before walking the length of the room and opening the door that led into the office proper. He reappeared in the doorway a few seconds later, letter free and closed the door behind him.

“Shall we go to lunch, Will?”

Will looked into the politely expectant face of Hannibal before rushing forward and taking ahold of the man’s face in his hands. A quick, open mouthed kiss was shared before both men broke apart.

“I still don’t know where to go, Hannibal. But please pick a place I could cover my half of the bill.”

“Nonsense, I will be covering the full extent. You are too kind to offer, though.”

“Hannibal, this whole thing was my idea.”

“I tend to take control of things, Will, we both know that.”

Hannibal placed a possessive smack to Will’s backside before moving out into the hallway and out of sight. Will let a sigh wrack his body before he decided he had no choice but to follow the man, though a small grin had graced his livened features.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Hannibal visits Will to solve the pest problem in his garden.

Chapter Notes

Still taking prompts, I'm not too sure how long this story will be though. Maybe a total of ten or so? It really depends on how well I can continue to write them as in character as possible.

Thank you for all of the kudos and views, guys, I really appreciate it :)

“What are you doing?”

Will didn’t know why he was asking the stag, he knew it wouldn’t answer him. Only lead him on another excursion. He was standing out in his yard with the dogs running around in the early sunshine. They had all been whining to get out, so Will had shoved the blanket off of him and decided to try and get some sleep in the warm summer morning out on his porch. He was seated comfortably in one of the chairs he had out on it for him and the dogs, leaning heavily into the back of the chair. His legs spread out in front of him were tingling.

The stag that was standing just in front of the steps that led down into the yard, staring at him with its beady black eyes. It wanted him to follow it, but Will wasn’t about to fall for that again.

The last time he had done that, he had ended up walking down the main highway out of Wolf Trap and towards the unknown. He was staring at the strong legs that the animal was standing on, wondering how handsome it would look if it was running full tilt out in an open field and through the rich foliage of the woods around his house.

There was a loud barrage of barking followed by the sound of a car silently pulling into the drive way. Will glanced at the small dirt path before fixing his eyes back on the stag, only it was no longer there. Winston stood in its place. The dog was gazing at Will with the same intent look that the stag had, only his eyes were soft and honey brown. He was more intent on keeping an eye on Will than the figure that was now getting out of the car.

Will turned to face the car, realizing that Hannibal once again had his life put together more than he did, and discovered that it was a sleek, black Bentley. The man was reaching through

the open back door on the driver's side, picking up another brown, paper bag from the seat. It didn't appear to be overflowing as the first bag had been, but it did seem to be a bit heavier as Hannibal had an arm braced beneath it and wrapped around it.

Without thinking, Will stood up to greet the man. True to his words after his last visit, he did dress in a simpler fashion. He had forgone the suit jacket once again, though the gold and purple paisleys that looped over the black fabric of his waist coat still matched his black trousers. A plain white, dress shirt was doing a nice job of showing off Hannibal's arms with the sleeves rolled up as he carried the bag towards the house, doing his best to ignore the curious dogs.

"I had a feeling you would be up at this hour. But might I ask what you were doing sleeping on your porch with the dogs running about?"

"The dogs are out yonder because they were having conniptions in the house. Was I sleeping?"

"You appeared to be, were you not aware of it?"

"No, I might have fallen asleep after I settled into the chair. I didn't get much sleep, too much noise in my head. That damn stag keeps crooning at me every time I think I'm about to fall asleep."

"More hallucinations, Will? We might need to start a log up to keep track of them, see if they're progressing."

"Hannibal, its fine. The stag isn't my most prominent issue at the moment."

"I'll leave the matter alone for now. I'm much more interested in why you're only dressed in boxers and a t-shirt."

Will glanced down at himself, realizing that he was in fact donning his ratty, once white t-shirt and his boxer shorts. He flushed before turning around and leading the way into the house. He had noticed the stare Hannibal had given his lower half, no doubt remembering their last encounter when he had had his hands in that particular spot. Will shuddered, the memory of the older man's hands on his body coming to the forefront of his mind.

"I was too tired to get dressed, besides no one comes around this end of the block."

Hannibal moved closer to place a greeting kiss on the man's still moving lips. It was rough in nature but it was quick, fueling the heat that had begun to stir within both men. Hannibal moved around Will to hold the door open for the flock of dogs that were running towards it. They yipped and barked excitedly at Will and Hannibal as they ran past them and into the house. Will followed them at a more leisurely pace, allowing Hannibal a nice view of his backside as he did so.

The hand that had been holding the door wound its way around his hips from beside him, fingers playing with the elastic waistband of his boxer shorts. There was a slight hum to his voice when he spoke next.

“Did you buy the basil, Will?”

Hannibal removed his hand from Will’s body as they entered the kitchen. He placed the paper bag atop the counter and began to empty the bag in front of him, revealing what he had brought along for the pizza. Will should’ve known the man would have actual pizza flour as well as regular flour. There was also a wedge of each colby, parmesan, provolone, and mozzarella cheese. There was also a small bundle of spinach as well as a few bottles of seasonings. There was also a mason jar full of what looked to be ice cream.

“Let me guess, you made gelato for dessert.”

It was more of a statement, but Hannibal smiled at Will’s dead panned face and treated it like a question. He began to move about the kitchen, placing the flour and cheeses in the fridge beside the bunch of organic basil that Will had gone to two different stores to find.

“Indeed. I also brought along some pistachios to top it off. Organic of course."

Will was a little put off by how well Hannibal was taking care of him and all the work he had put into a meal that they wouldn’t even be enjoying until that evening. Wanting to have Hannibal feel as he was at the moment, Will reminded him that he got the basil and that it was in the fridge where he had just stored everything else.

“I saw that, you did well.”

Hannibal walked over to him and placed a kiss upon his cheek before leaning around him to watch his hands in the sink. He scrubbed his hands in the meticulous way that was drilled into him as a surgeon and emergency room doctor. Once again, reminding Will of how dull he has compared to the man beside him. Hannibal had been a doctor, a surgeon, he was a psychologist, he drew intricate buildings in his spare time. All Will did was make his own flies, fish, and knew how to repair motors.

“You are special to me, Will.”

Hannibal’s dry hands were suddenly on his waist. Will reached out to level himself, his hands finding the man’s shoulders yet again. He looked up into Hannibal’s face, noticing the hardened look that had formed upon it. His eyes were stern, he always seemed to know how Will was feeling before he even realized it himself.

“I just can’t figure out why, though. That’s the thing.”

A sigh fell from the older man’s lips. He moved one of his hands to rest on the base of Will’s neck, guiding him to look at him once again. He caught Will’s eyes before they settled to stare at his mouth, that would be good enough.

“Will,” Hannibal licked his lips before speaking, well aware of Will’s eyes following the movement of his tongue, “I have come across numerous amounts of people in both my professional and personal life. No one was good enough for me, but you are. I don’t mind that you prefer the company of your dogs to people. I don’t mind that you have a hard time making eye contact. You’ve looked me in the eye three times in the span of a half hour, you

are making progress on your terms. But I will not tolerate you feeling horrible over whatever sacrifice you think I am making to spend my time with you."

"You're just so much more than I am, Hannibal. I don't know how to cook very well."

"Then I'll teach you."

"I'm not good at social interaction in the slightest."

"You're doing just fine at the moment."

"I have so many animals that they get food before I do."

"You show your love for them."

"I-I've never been with a man before."

"I do not mind as long as you are faithful."

"I'm not intelligent enough for you."

"…"

Will turned his gaze away from Hannibal, not willing to see the disappointment that would surely cross his face.

"Will, your IQ is just a few lesser than mine. Just because you never pursued a career in the medical field does not mean your intelligence doesn't equate with mine."

"I have an accent."

"I thought we settled this matter already, I find your accent endearing. If you do recall, I nearly took you there on the chair in my office. Another instance occurred in my waiting room just a few days ago. There is no need at all to worry, Will. I have chosen you and you will simply have to accept that."

"Hannibal, you're too good to me."

"You deserve it, Will. You been through quite a lot, it's time for someone to put you back together. Now I do believe you said the word 'yonder' when I first arrived. Would you mind saying it again for me?"

Will's eyes snapped to Hannibal's before resting on his lips again. He licked his own in imitation of Hannibal's previous action.

"Yonder."

The twang in his voice warmed him, reminding him of when his father would call him into the house for dinner every evening. Hannibal seemed to feel the warmth as well, he leaned in closer, pressing his nose to the column of his neck. Will's heartbeat began to race, he was still

a little hesitant towards the physical contact aspect of this relationship, even after the instances Hannibal mentioned. But when Hannibal pressed his lips to Will's, the younger man's worries washed away.

"Make noise for me, Will."

Hannibal whispered into his neck, pressing his body flush against Will's. A gasp sounded in the air as he felt the rather quickly growing arousal press against him. He shifted against it, hoping to create a steady rhythm of friction between them. When Will's hips stuttered, Hannibal shifted his arms around his waist and lifted him clear off of the ground. A high pitched keening fell from Will's lips as he instinctively wrapped his legs around Hannibal's waist and tightened the hold he had around the man's neck with his hands, reveling in the friction that resulted from the action.

The sound of rustling could he heard from Hannibal's shirt as he stepped to the right of the sink and placed Will atop the counter in front of him. The counter was cold in contrast to the heated room, the windows having been opened in an attempt to stave off the heat of the early day. Goosebumps rose along Will's arms and legs at the cool feeling of the counter beneath him, his bare legs still wrapped around Hannibal's waist.

The older man's hands began to caress the bumps that had risen on Will's skin, his warm hands smoothing them as he ran them down the man's legs. Moans floated through the air as Hannibal let his hands wander. Will had started to grind himself against Hannibal, the newfound position allowing for a friction they couldn't accomplish when both of them had been standing.

"Nng, Hannibal, please."

Will panted as the man's hands stilled on his thighs, teasingly close to his groin. Hannibal smirked into the younger man's neck, his fingers gripping the skin tighter. He took a small step back, causing Will's legs to drape over the edge of the counter, his calves bouncing against the cabinets below before resting in place. Hannibal was quick to give into the man below him, the sounds falling from his lips too heady to ignore, he wanted to hear more of them.

As soon as Hannibal removed the man's boxers, his hand wrapped around the arousal that had been rubbing so deliciously against his own. Will's back arched at the sudden warmth of the man's hands on him, leaning back to rest on the wall once the surprise wore off. Hannibal began pumping Will at a steady pace, loving the soft sounds that rose into the air. Will bucked his hips in time with the steady pace, his face scrunched up in pleasure as he leaned his back and head against the wall behind him.

When Hannibal's fingers brushed the sensitive head and slit, Will let out another high pitched keening sound. His whole body had lurched forward, his chest heaving as he opened his eyes and connected them with Hannibal's. Both men's eyes were darkened by pleasure, Will from experiencing it and Hannibal from seeing Will in this almost erotic position. Hannibal kept his gaze as he moved his fingers to brush the slit again. The loud moan that tore itself from Will's lips sounded almost pained, stirring in Hannibal his baser instincts.

Unfortunately, the sound attracted the attention of the dogs in the living room. They began to bark, Winston and the two smaller dogs rounded the corner of the counter behind Hannibal and began to growl at him. Hannibal ignored them, determined to not be interrupted this time. He was about to shoo them away with a harsh whistle, when Will beat him to it. As if the whistle wasn't enough of a warning, Will voiced his anger next.

"THAT'S ENOUGH."

His voice was harsh, full of an authority that Hannibal had never heard from the man before. The dogs scattered, instantly fearing the wrath of their normally complacent, kind, and loving master. Hannibal watched as they did so, the fear in their eyes that overrode the confusion at having actually been yelled at. Hannibal turned his gaze back to Will, a grin coming to his face as Will looked into his eyes again. The older man's actions roughened, he gripped Will's member harder and began to pump it faster. The keening sounds were back, falling from Will's lips even as he kept his eyes on the man in front of him.

Will shut his eyes as his jaw began to go slack.

"I'm- I'm gonna-"

A deep moan cut off his words as his orgasm hit him. His chest rose and fell in a quick pace as he dirtied the shirt he was wearing, Hannibal having carefully moved out of easy range. He carefully removed his hand from around Will and leaned over to draw his nose over the line of his neck, his hands coming to rest upon slackening shoulders.

Will's lashes fluttered on his cheeks as Hannibal began to place chaste kisses along his jawline and up to his mouth. The kiss that he captured Will's lips in was passionately dizzying. Will's mind went blank as his hands reached for the nearest thing that would ground him, his fingers digging harshly into Hannibal's upper arms. He groaned into the kiss, reveling in the feel of Hannibal's tongue caressing his own.

They parted, both panting with the effort put into the kiss. Will brought his eyes up to Hannibal's without much thought, the fog that had settled in his mind lulling him into a state of calmness.

"Hmm, Hannibal, you're fantastic."

Hannibal shifted his mouth to hover beside Will's ear. His voice was as smooth as silk as he spoke.

"I've never seen you like that, Will, but I would very much like to again."

Will's face flushed, both at the realization of the position he was in, the manner in which he had spoken to his dogs, and the promise that rang in Hannibal's voice. He moved to push off from the wall, his bottom aching from having the hard counter underneath him for so long. Hannibal placated the man by placing a kiss to his mouth before moving away.

He grabbed the dish towel that was still draped over the handle of the oven, though it had been washed since his last visit. He went the towel under a warm flow of water from the sink

before meticulously cleaning Will's nether regions free from the last vestiges of his orgasm. His motions were slow, so as to not affect the sensitive nerves, almost in a caring manner.

"You don't have to do that, you know."

Will shyly smiled at him, feeling as if he was floating. It had been a while since he had successfully managed to get off, even longer since someone had done it for him. And they sure as hell hadn't cleaned the mess up afterwards. Hannibal rinsed the towel again before hanging it over the rim of the sink to be thrown into the dirty clothes hamper later. He moved back in front of Will and helped the man put his boxers back onto his hips.

"Will, do not worry about it. If I didn't want to do it, I wouldn't have. And no, you do not have to return the favor at the moment. We have more immediate matters to solve."

Will sighed as he pushed himself from the counter and back onto his bare feet. A light dizziness took over him for a few moments before he regained his bearings. His mind was racing with what had just happened. He felt a little bad about not solving the obvious problem that Hannibal was suppressing, the guilt bubbling up in his stomach.

"I'll go get dressed. I have a change of clothes that might fit you, if you don't want to get your own dirty. It's set out on the dining room table."

"It isn't a problem, we will be in and out of your garden in little more than an hour. I've found a rather interesting solution to your pest problem."

Hannibal gave the man a small smile.

"Oh- um, alright. I'll be right back down then."

"I'll wait right here for you, Will. Do not look so worried."

Will flashed him a hesitant smile, the shyness he displayed in social situations showing in his eyes, but not quite showing on his face. Hannibal returned the smile gently.

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Hannibal and Will finally get some alone time, but how long does it last?

Chapter Notes

Hey there. This will be a relatively short story, having somewhere close to ten chapters total. Just a heads up :)

A wave of guilt hit Will like a ton of bricks. His stomach suddenly lurched as he moved to take another bite from the slice of half-eaten pizza in his hand. He lowered the slice back onto the plate in front of him, frowning as he thought of how he had treated his dogs earlier in the day. He reached into his lap for the napkin he had draped over his thigh, the absence of dog noses brushing his hand making his heart ache.

He wiped his hands before placing the crumpled napkin beside his plate, nearly knocking over the glass of wine that Hannibal had served him alongside the slightly cooled pizza. Will roughly settled his elbows on the top of the dining room table and cradled his face in his hands, rubbing them over the stubble along his jaw and over his tired eyes underneath his glasses.

“Is the food not satisfactory?”

Will sighed, not expecting Hannibal to take insult to his behavior. In all honestly the pizza was delicious. The cheeses all paired together in a lovely, melted mass atop the thin layer of marinara sauce the two of them had let stew for a few hours this afternoon, the basil and spinach that topped the cheese was just crispy enough to add a unique layer of texture between the melted cheese and bready crust in every bite. He voiced his opinion of the pizza, hoping that Hannibal would realize it wasn’t the pizza that had turned his appetite off.

“Ah, the manner in which you spoke to your dogs earlier must have sunken in, then.”

Will nodded jerkily before rubbing at his face again, his hands not doing much to cool his heating face. He couldn’t believe how fast the tears had developed, the lump in his throat warning him that they would soon brim over and cascade down his cheeks.

“I’ve never spoken to them like that before.”

He managed to get out despite the painful, almost choking feel of the lump in his throat. He moved one of his hands to rub where it had settled beneath his adam's apple.

"I feel terrible for having done it."

"It is understandable, though, why you did. They were being very unreasonable given the circumstances."

"They're dogs, they were just trying to protect me when they thought I was in trouble."

"You are their alpha, it is a given they would protect you in the face of a threat."

"Even though I know there was no threat, I feel horrible for having shouted at them when all they were doing was trying to help."

Hannibal placed the fork and knife in his hands neatly down onto his plate. He took in the way Will jumped slightly as the metal clinked against the china of the plate. There was no dog whining at the sound, though they both knew it bothered them. They were all in the living room, not daring to reenter the kitchen after that morning. When Will had come back down from getting dressed they had still been subdued, even when he opened the door to let them out before going out himself.

"They are like your children and parenting does entail difficult situations. This is one of them. Should you have not intervened in the way that you did, they could have, though I doubt it, moved in for an attack. By intervening you proved to them that I am a trustworthy person despite the rather wounded sounds that were a result of our interaction. It was a test of both your authority and morality. To let them continue such behavior would have resulted in more instances similar to it."

Will wiped at his eyes, intent on keeping the tears down, not willing to let Hannibal see him break down after how well the day had been going. He sighed, not knowing how to respond. The older man was correct, of course. If he hadn't intervened they would've caused more disruption in that instance and perhaps in later instances as well. They were strays after all, no matter how long they had lived alongside him, they would protect him if need be. But he hadn't expected them to behave in such a way, Hannibal hadn't been doing anything threatening, but again, they were dogs.

"I just- I feel terrible."

"I am positive they will forgive you. If you have never acted as such and return to normal behavior, they will follow your lead. They will still love you, Will."

The word love stirred Will into motion. He stood from his chair, placed his hands flat atop the table, leaned forward over their plates, and kissed Hannibal full on the lips. Before the older man had the time to react, Will was disappearing around the doorway leading into the living room.

Hannibal sat there, slightly startled at Will's quick transition from a near break down to kissing him to leaving the room without excusing himself, finishing his meal, or even

clearing his place at the table. If he had been anyone else, Hannibal would've taken it as shockingly rude, but he knew Will was just a collage of complex emotions and wasn't doing it purposefully.

There was silence in the other room, the tension running through the doorway and into the dining room palpable. Hannibal could smell the fear wafting from the many dogs laying around the living room. There was a shuffle as Will removed something from a shelf. Curiosity getting the better of him, Hannibal folded the napkin across his legs and settled it carefully atop the table beside his plate before following the sound.

Will had taken a glass jar down from the mantle over the fireplace and was cradling it in his hands. His artist hands were removing the lid in a fluid motion before he placed it on the mantle. Will settled himself in the middle of the pile of dog beds that he had had to step over to get to the fireplace. The dogs began to shy away from him despite the scent of their treats wafting in the air. They smelled as if they were handmade, from venison Will may have come across behind his house but it was too late to save it.

"Come on, daddy's sorry for yelling at you."

Will's voice was soft, the guilt in his voice obvious enough for the animals to stop trying to get away from him. Winston was the first dog to vault himself at Will, jumping from the chair beside the front door and straight into his lap. That seemed to be the signal the other dogs were waiting for as they too converged on Will.

One of the dogs, though didn't seem to be swayed by the appearance of the treats. It was one of the bigger dogs, their long tail laying still as it stayed stationary beneath one of the chairs. Will smiled softly as he moved his hand out towards the dog, hoping to pacify the animal.

"Come on, cher, I'm not gonna hurt ya'."

The animal seemed to rethink her position as her legs twitched, Will's accent conveying something to her that Hannibal associated with the calmness Will must've felt after a long day lecturing and willingness to spend a few minutes playing with his dogs even as sleep tugged at him. After a few tense moments, she deemed the comfortable nature of Will to be true and joined him and the other dogs on the pile of beds.

A hearty laugh fell from the previously depressed man as the dogs licked at his hands and face, barking their happiness along with him. It seemed to be getting out of hand in Hannibal's opinion and Will's thoughts seemed to edge forward to join his.

"Tss."

The dogs immediately quieted down, laying or sitting down around Will at the obvious command. Hannibal was grateful that none of them began to drool when Will handed a treat to each of them in turn. The two smaller dogs ran for cover as soon as they had their treats, hoping to avoid the attention of the others towering over them as they snacked. Winston was the only dog that settled in Will's lap directly once the treats had been handed out, the fluffy dog made itself comfortable as it laid across Will's crossed legs.

His red and white plaid shirt was doing surprisingly well with all of the dogs having settled around him, the hair seeming to float before landing onto the beds instead of him.

“Just as I told you, they will still love you.”

Will looked up to find Hannibal smiling down at him, though the man’s dark eyes had become stormy at the sound of Will’s last words. Will smiled shyly back at the man, embarrassed at the nickname he had used to address his dog. It was a typical name given used for children and loved ones, surely something that it kept between the family and those you were closest to. It was odd to have Hannibal in the room to hear him use the term.

“And ‘cher’ means…?”

The term sounded strange as Hannibal’s foreign accent flowed over it. Hannibal’s look was curious as he settled into one of the surprisingly clean chairs to wait for an explanation. He crossed his legs at the knee and placed his hands on the upper most one as he leaned back into the chair, comfortable.

“It’s- uh, term of endearment, actually.”

“Interesting.”

A comfortable silence fell over the room, save for the heavy breathing of the dogs. Will looked down at Winston in his lap and a genuine smile of joy overtook his features. His eyes lit up as he remembered how affectionate the dog had been when Will had first brought him home and bathed him.

“Shall I go clean up the remains of our dinner?”

Will looked up at the question. Hannibal seemed to be suppressing something, his eyes guarded as they shared a look. Will made to move up, gently nudging Winston from his lap before doing so.

“I can take care of that. You made dinner, I’ll clean.”

Will picked up the glass jar that had been placed on the ground beside the dog beds, he reached over for the lid and placed it back onto the mantle. His back seemed to be tense through his shirt, Hannibal noticed with a slight frown. The empath had insisted on doing most of the work out in the garden, having used the organic spray that Hannibal had brought to both get rid of the pests that had been targeting the tomatoes as well as aid the plants in growing. His excuse had been that Hannibal’s clothes were too valuable and his purchase of the expensive spray having been enough help.

Will began to unbutton his shirt as he walked towards the dining room, his fingers dancing across the buttons. He shrugged the flannel off of his body, exposing the white t-shirt he had on underneath. The shirt found itself draped over the arm of Hannibal’s chair while Will exited the room. Hannibal raised an eyebrow in a questioning manner.

The clatter of dishes in the next room was hushed, Will was trying to be careful as he gathered them. Quiet footfalls could be heard on the tile of the floor as the sound of running water started up. The hush of domesticity stirred in Hannibal a warmth he typically associated with the rush he got from a particularly vindicated killing. He felt at ease in this house so unlike his own with the man he had and been intrigued by since the moment that their paths had crossed.

“Will?”

“Yeah?”

“I wish to take a shower.”

There was a clatter of china in the sink causing the dog’s to jump in their spots, Hannibal’s request catching Will off guard. He heard the man curse his reaction before the water turned off. Suddenly, Will reappeared in the living room, the front of his shirt wet with a splash of water.

“Excuse me?”

“The spray was very potent, Will. You said yourself it was almost choking. I can make out a slight odor left lingering in my clothes. I wish to wash them and take a shower.”

“Oh, um, well I don’t have the best soap, Hannibal.”

“As long as I don’t have to use that horrid scent you call aftershave, anything you have to offer should have will be satisfactory.”

.:V:.

Grunts sounded in the air as Will and Hannibal collided with the doorway leading into the upstairs bathroom. Will’s back protested the abuse, already tight from working out in the garden. The soothing hands Hannibal ran over his flimsy shirt helped to dispel the pain that had blossomed there. Will’s hands tangled in the older man’s hair as he connected their lips in an opened mouth kiss.

Their tongues danced together, fighting for dominance that they both knew Hannibal would win. The older man groaned when Will raked his hands down his front, grasping for purchase. His hands were hot against Hannibal’s exposed stomach from having been tangled in Hannibal’s hair. With a warning growl Hannibal gripped the wrists of the roaming hands. He pinned them above the younger man’s head as he leaned in to press his body against the doorway with his own.

Will let out a loud moan as their hips connected, prompting Hannibal to rock against him.

“Hah, Hannibal, please.”

The man latched his mouth on the younger man’s neck, sucking his way down to the collar of his shirt. Hannibal frowned down at the offending material before fingering the hem of it and removing it. Will’s hands pushed the already open shirt off of Hannibal’s body in return, his

vest having come off in the living room. The clothes were tossed to the floor before Hannibal hooked his arms around Will's back and lifted him up off the ground. A strangled gasp fell from the younger man's lips as he quickly wrapped his arms around Hannibal's neck, his legs around his hips.

Hannibal roughly set Will onto the unmade bed, causing the man to bounce slightly before his body came to rest. He immediately leaned forward and began undoing the belt around the other man's waist, placing open mouthed kisses on the man's abdomen. Hannibal groaned in appreciation, the first instance he had finally let his feelings take hold of him. Will tugged the leather of his belt out of the loops in one flash of movement and unbuttoned the man's pants before quickly standing on his knees to kiss him heatedly.

Will's hands tangled in Hannibal's already mused hair, the man's hands returning the favor of undoing the belt looping around Will's waist. He was smoother with the cracked leather of Will's belt, taking his time with unbuttoning the man's pants. When Will bit down along his jawline, Hannibal pushed the man to the bed with a moan. Will's half lidded eyes weren't alarmed at the rough action but were dark with arousal as he looked up at the doctor standing above him.

They both looked at each other, taking in the way in which the each had worked the other up. Hannibal was standing at the edge of Will's bed, looking down at the man in question. The older man suppressed a moan at the look in Will's eyes as his own dark ones swirled with passion. His upper body was exposed to the room, the chest hair he kept maintained was as obvious as the arousal straining against his boxer shorts where his pants rested low and unbuttoned on his hips.

Will was watching him intently as he laid on the bed, his back resting on the covers and sheets that tangled around him. His chest was heaving with the effort to catch his breath, the kisses he had been placing on Hannibal's jaw had been more important than breathing a few moments prior. His own arousal was obvious, his pants in much the same state as Hannibal's.

Hannibal's hands were rough on the Will's ankles as he latched onto them. He looked into Will's searching eyes before pulling the fabric of Will's pants from his body. Before they even hit the floor, Hannibal had removed the boxers underneath along with his own pants and boxers and was crawling over Will.

Will's arms came up to snake around Hannibal's shoulders as he tugged the man's face down to kiss him like he had that first time all those weeks ago in his kitchen for the first time. Hannibal kissed back with fervor, pressing his body flush against the man's beneath him. Both men groaned appreciatively, reveling in the warmth that spiked through the air and the lightning that spread through their bodies.

Their panting breathing could be heard throughout the room as they broke from their kiss. Hannibal began kissing down his neck and down to his collarbone near the base of his neck. He licked up the length of Will's neck before biting down on the man's collarbone. Will hissed into Hannibal's hair, where he had been placing chaste kisses.

"Fuck, Hannibal, do that again."

“Such vulgar language, Will.”

Hannibal took Will’s word to heart, he began biting his way up the man’s neck. The noises that filled the room were wanton and caused Hannibal’s arousal to twitch against the man below him. The doctor shifted one of his arms from beside Will’s head to grip the man’s hip. Hannibal sucked on the man’s neck, soothing a particularly hard bite he had placed beside the adam’s apple.

Will sucked in a deep breath just as a shrilling ring sounded in the air. Hannibal hadn’t even known the man owned a landline, but there was the evidence. He was about to ignore it when Will roughly twisted below him to reach up towards the small table near the head of the bed, his action causing delicious friction to spark between them. Hannibal groaned and he was sure it was audible over the line as Will snatched the phone from its stand and poked harshly at the ‘answer’ button.

“I’m busy at the moment, Jack. Don’t bother me.”

Just as soon as he had moved to answer the phone, he had moved back beneath Hannibal, their bodies aligned once again.

“You need to pick up the habit of speaking like that to those who see you as a tool.”

Will was about to respond to Hannibal’s sensual purr when a knock sounded on the front door.

“Jesus fucking Christ, why can’t people just leave me alone for once. Normally they don’t want anything to do with me, but as soon as-“

Hannibal cut Will’s rant short with an impassioned kiss, delving his tongue into the man’s already open mouth.

“Mm, Will, you are so enrapturing when you lose your temper like that. But I think it would be best if you answer the door, I have suspicions that it may be our dear Uncle Jack.”

Will always experienced a sense impending anxiety every time he came face to face with Jack Crawford. The work that they collaborated on was anything beyond what could be deemed normal, even in the world of working for the FBI. Will opened his front door a few minutes later, having disposed of his dirty clothes and dressed in clean ones while Hannibal struggled to free his clothes of the wrinkles left behind by Will’s grasping hands.

Jack didn’t even greet Will, instead he walked past him and into the living room. He looked around at the dogs who laid spread about the room before turning to face an obviously put off Will.

“Is there anything I should be aware of, Will. Like, oh I don’t know, why your therapist’s car is parked in your driveway?”

His eyes were harsh, though there was a tinge of worry and confusion within the depths of them as he gazed relentlessly at Will. Will’s eyes broke from his for a millisecond to take in

the shirt he had draped over the arm of Hannibal's chair over along with the incriminating vest that belonged to Hannibal. Jack noticed the glance Will had given something behind him despite the fleeting nature of it.

"I was simple paying the man a visit, Agent Crawford. We are friends more than we are a professional and patient. He is not even a number in a record, nor a name in a schedule book. You made it abundantly clear that you wanted no record of him seeing me for the help you think he needs."

Hannibal walked into the room, somehow having managed to get through the house to the kitchen to make it appear as if that was where he had been all along. His shirt and trousers were impressively smooth, the man having managed to work the wrinkles Will created out of the fabric. He too noticed the incriminating material of his vest alongside the abandoned shirt, though his gaze was much quicker than Will's.

"Dr. Lecter. While I appreciate your willingness to accommodate the…unique situation, I will say that you've breached over into uncharted territory."

"In what ways, Agent Crawford?"

Hannibal's questioning tone was polite, holding back the slight worry the man was feeling.

"I was clearly interrupting something, as Will so kindly informed me of when he answered the phone."

"Jack," Will sighed, rubbing one of his hands over his face. The tone Jack had picked up was anything but kind. It was clear the man was angry, maybe even a little disgusted. Will ran his hand over his eyes, his glasses resting in the breast pocket of his shirt. "We were out in the garden, tending to a pest infestation that I recently inherited."

"Explain to me then, Will, why there was a moan filtering through the line."

"Ah, I must apologize for that. I am getting rather along in my years, Agent Crawford. I am not the young man I used to be and being out in the garden for a whole afternoon had begun to take its toll on me."

Jack looked from Hannibal to Will, not quite sure what he just walked into.

"Oh! You think we were-" Will's characteristic awkwardness finally showed itself. He placed his hands in his pockets only to remove them. Jack watched as he explained the situation, his voice stumbling over certain words that all three deemed to be too crude for the empath to normally speak.

"Ah, I see. So there...isn't anything inappropriate occurring between you two?"

"Of course not, Jack. Dr. Lecter was kind enough to cover the charges for a solution to my pest problem I couldn't possibly afford on my budget. It's a matter between friends."

"Indeed it is."

Hannibal allowed a small smile to grace his features. Jack sighed heavily, his relief obvious. But then he noticed Will rub his hand along his neck, the marks Hannibal had worried into the skin an obvious red on his pale skin. He quickly rounded on the man, there was only one other person in the house and Will certainly couldn't have caused such abrasions in his own skin.

"Those marks on Will's neck beg to differ, Dr. Lecter."

Hannibal didn't miss the way Jack had enunciated the title of 'doctor'. It was obvious the man was in a dilemma of a situation. On the one hand, he was authorizing Will to access crime scenes and to work in the field when he previously had been deemed too unstable to do. Hannibal had been enlisted as a way of working around the rules Jack knew he was breaking, but the issue of a relationship occuring between a not-quite patient and a not-quite therapist had never even crossed the agent's mind.

"Bug bites, naturally. Will is allergic to mosquitoes and working outside would surely attract their unwanted attention."

"It's true, Jack. Remember when we found Budish? I was applying antibiotic cream to my hands and arms for weeks after being in that old barn, the mosquitoes ate me alive out there."

Jack sighed in resignation, he did remember. He moved closer to Will, Will letting him breach the bubble of personal space to inspect the small, irritated, red marks upon his neck. Apparently they passed the inspection, because Jack's voice had shifted when he spoke next. He was back to normal.

“Alright, now that this whole misunderstanding is sorted out, Will, I need you to look over some case files before heading out north. There’s been a string of teenage murders that has the Ripper written all over them.”

Hannibal listened to the details of the murders, the scenes coming to his mind easily. He had targeted the particular vagabonds after they had caused a ruckus at his regular grocers. They had been incessantly rude to fellow patrons before they had been struck by the idea to steal the bottle of wine he had chosen for dinner that particular night.

The doctor bid Jack goodbye with a polite smile. When Jack had left to go start the car while Will gathered his wallet, keys, and jacket, Hannibal caught his eye.

“I expect you for dinner in a few nights time, once the cases are sorted out of course.”

“I’ll be there, Hannibal, you can count on it.”

Will flashed a nervous smile before placing a quick kiss on the older man’s lips. They both exited the house, Will locking up behind them.

Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

Some trouble arises.

Chapter Notes

places down in front of readers

please don't be mad at where I left it, I'll update soon, I promise

scurries away to write some more

Will shuffled on his feet as he waited for his knock to summon Hannibal to the door. The curls Will could see out of the corner of his eyes were damp from the mist that was a precursor to the thunderstorm making its way over Baltimore later that night. He fumbled with the glass jar he had filled with a batch of cinnamon cookies along with the freshly laundered vest that Hannibal had left at his house. Will didn't know why he had decided to make cookies, but he had felt the need to do something to keep him occupied between the time he had between getting home and driving to Hannibal's.

The crime scenes had been the Ripper's, that mush Will was sure of. But a feeling of unease had settled into his stomach as he had gone over the photos and then saw the bodies in person. There was something new in the case, though Will hadn't informed anyone of it yet. He had seen something new when he had taken the vantage point of murderer. He had felt a similar jolt in his stomach that he had come to associate with Hannibal. Needless to say, Will was working out what could have caused the murderer to feel such a similar sensation in the midst of his crime, even now.

"Good evening, Will." Hannibal had suddenly appeared in the opening doorway. "I wasn't expecting you until a later hour, but this is a pleasant surprise nonetheless. Please, come in."

Will held out both the jar and vest to the doctor, the jolt he had just been speculating about reverberated through his abdomen. He flashed a smile as he made his way through the door, Hannibal having taken the offered items and taking a few steps back to allow Will entrance. Will shrugged out of his coat and placed it on the handsome cherry coat stand that occupied the foyer. He turned to face Hannibal, unsure of what do to, he had only ever been in the man's house once before. Hannibal consoled the man with a small smile of his own.

“Did you make these yourself, Will? They smell wonderful.”

“I made them this afternoon. I uh, ran into that guy from your office in at the market while I was buying the cinnamon.”

Hannibal’s dark eyes swirled with an unknown emotion, piquing Will’s interest.

“He didn’t engage me or anything, though he is a poor stalker.”

“He is rather poor in personality as well. I’ll confront him about it at his next session, whether he brings it up or not. He is rather inappropriate involving those who catch his interest.”

“I just don’t want to run into him again.”

“Do not worry, I’ll speak to him.” Hannibal led the way into the study, looking back at Will as he did so. “Would you like a towel for your hair, it’s rather damp.”

“What? Oh, no thank you. It’ll fluff out soon enough.”

Will’s thoughts stalled as he experienced another jolt in his abdomen. The most recent teenage victim had had hair very similar to his own, the dark hair curly just as his own was. Will took a step back from the man, realizing that Hannibal must have deposited the jar he handed him off in the kitchen while he had been distracted. He motioned for Will to take a seat on the lush, leather couch.

“I haven’t started dinner yet, would you like a say in what we have?”

“Oh, no, don’t bother changing things for me. I’ll eat anything you make me.”

“Must you always sell yourself so short?”

“Jack insisted that I wasn’t trying hard enough to see the Ripper. And I’m beginning to agree with him. I’m cautious when I’m in his view point. He’s so…sophisticated. In both the way he displays his kills and in the way he fleetingly shows himself from behind a black rustling veil.”

Hannibal felt his body warm at Will’s words. The younger man was praising him in the most abstract of ways, though he would never know it. He shifted in his seat, crossing his legs at the knee to get more comfortable, though not too comfortable.

“Fear is the cost of imagination. Your imagination is so ready to go into auto-pilot that it is quite understandable how hesitant you are to dwell in the Ripper’s mindset. Jack does not yet understand just how hard it is for you, getting into the minds of society’s demons.”

“But you do.”

Hannibal hummed his agreement, looking readily in Will’s searching eyes. There were too many emotions swirling in the icy-blue depths of his eyes for the doctor to gauge all of them. A sigh inflated the younger man’s back before his breathing returned to a steady rhythm. He

seemed stressed, but there was more to it than normal. It was as if he was trying to come to terms with something he realized, a leap he may have made but not told anyone about.

“You’ve made a leap.”

Hannibal’s hunch was proven correct as Will’s shoulders tensed momentarily before relaxing again. His hands shook in just the slightest manner as he raked them through his damp hair. He nodded his head in answer, not yet ready to voice his ideas, not even to the one man who had helped develop and expand ideas on every case he brought to the man.

“Have you told anyone of your findings yet?”

Will shook his head, his hands still tangled in the dark locks of his hair. Nervous laughter bubbled from his mouth as he turned an incredulous look at Hannibal. Hannibal did nothing but smile serenely at the man, hoping to soften him up enough to tell him. He was curious in both a professional and personal manner, wondering if he would have to take measures to protect himself further from being caught and if he needed to get Will to a doctor sooner than he would have liked to treat the infection slowly growing within his head.

“I actually wanted to talk to you about it first. You like my hair don’t you?”

Hannibal paused at the odd question that certainly wasn’t what he had been expecting.

“In spite of the unruly nature of it, yes.”

“Mm, the most recent victim’s hair had been similar to mine. The Ripper was rather fond of his hair, it was mused up with his bare hands, though there was no more evidence other than the natural oils left behind from the tips of his fingers.”

Hannibal was silent, the memory of running his hands through the young teen’s hair coming to the forefront of his mind. He had lost control slightly in that moment, having realized he never had the chance to run his hands through Will’s curls. He had taken out the disappointment on the only man present, his hair having been similar enough to satiate the urge Hannibal had been suddenly overwhelmed by.

“It’s crude, really. I realize I’m hypothesizing that you’re the Ripper. But you couldn’t possibly be.”

“You are simply accessing all avenues of motive that are available to you. It was an interesting thought, Will, but I can assure you that I am, in fact, not the Ripper.”

Will sighed deeply again, the same nervous laughter riding the exhale.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean for it to sound like I was accusing you, I was just thinking out loud.”

“Understandable. Now, I still need to get a few things for tonight’s meal. Would you like to accompany me to the market?”

Will stood from his seat on the plush leather couch and moved to stand in front of Hannibal. He leaned down to place an apologetic kiss to the older man's lips, truly sorry for having just accused him of something so serious. Hannibal reached up to place his hands upon Will's face, cradling the man's strong jaw. His fingers were tickled slightly by the characteristic scruff on the man's face. He allowed the man entrance into his mouth, reveling in lingering taste of cinnamon and the natural taste of Will. Will groaned as his mouth was explored, his knees struggled to stay still as he fought the urge to situate himself in the other man's lap. He broke the kiss, panting to catch his breath.

"Shall we go?"

.:V:.

Will was sure that the samples of exotic cheeses and fruits in the opening section of the market cost more than he made in a day. The rich, deep wood beams that made up the ceiling of the store along with the dull cone lights overhead created an intimate atmosphere that he was taken surprise by. This was a store he wouldn't dare to enter on his own for fear of looking out of place.

He looked down at his attire. Majority of his golden brown tweed suit jacket covered the pastel forest greet button up he was wearing. The shirt tucked into a pair of dark brown slacks held around the man's hips with an aging brown leather belt. His shoes could have looked worse, Will thought, as he gazed down at his dress boots. Their brown leather was beginning to show the wear they had endured for the last couple of years.

Will sighed again, he seemed to be doing that a lot today and looked up. He shifted his weight on his feet to avoid colliding with a still Hannibal in front of him. The man was picking through a small crate of mushrooms and placing the ones he deemed appropriate into a small recycled cardboard container. Will observed the man as he did so, taking in how he seemed to exude the very aura of the store.

Hannibal was dressed in a handsome brown suit, the color complimenting Will's own outfit quite nicely. There was a crème dress shirt peeking out from beneath the suit jacket and waist coat. A golden hued tie did well to compliment the suit as well as Hannibal's tanned skin. The sleek, dark brown of Hannibal's shoes didn't scuff the ground as he rounded the display in front of him. Sometimes Will wondered just how much the man's outfits would cost, only to experience numbers of outrageous value bouncing around in his head, making him dizzy.

"Are you alright, Will? You seem distracted."

Will held out the wire basket he had in his hand for Hannibal to place the container of mushrooms in, rounding the display to do so.

"I'm just tired. It's been a long couple of-"

Will speech suddenly left him. He had been glancing around the section of the store they were in when he spotted a familiar, too well groomed beard. Franklin was trying to appear busy with picking out an appropriately sized slab of cheese from a display, though Will caught the way he would steal glances over at them. The man was doing a weak job of

appearing to be there on his own, he had his own wire basket, full of things that Will deemed the man thought would impress Hannibal should they run into each other. His glances were increasing as he noticed Will's adamant glare.

“Fuck.”

"I sincerely wish you would stop using such foul language, Will. We are in a very reputable facility."

"I told you I didn't want to run into him again."

Will spoke somewhat gruffly, his annoyance turning into anger at the situation. Will scoffed as Franklin tossed him a small, knowing smile. The innate man knew he was upsetting him, probably hoping to show Hannibal the extent of his anger.

Hannibal turned around to see what it was that had rustled Will’s annoyance so easily. It was apparent as soon as he had shifted his view, there was Franklin. If he remembered correctly, this would be the second instance Will had ‘run into’ the man today. The doctor felt not only jealously rise in him, but the urge to butcher the man without cause or regard for the meat he could gain from the instance. He just wanted the man gone, no use could be gained from such a troubling person.

“Ignore him, Will.”

Hannibal began to migrate towards the front of the store, it was obvious what he planned to do once the help desk came into their view. A very nervous looking young woman watched as they approached. Will glanced at Hannibal’s profile, finding the obvious annoyance on his handsome face.

“Good afternoon, sir, how may I help you?”

The woman’s voice shook as Hannibal stood in front of her, his face morphing into a polite smile.

“Not very well, unfortunately. My partner and I are trying to enjoy our visit, but there seems to be a man following our movement throughout your establishment. His blatant attention is beginning to wear on my nerves, my partner’s as well. We both have distressing careers and would like to enjoy our time off. I would be grateful to have this situation absolved as soon as possible. I do not take kindly to rude individuals.”

Hannibal’s voice was even, though it was obvious he wasn’t exactly thrilled as he had been when they first entered the store. Will shuffled his feet nervously at the title ‘partner’, he hadn’t bothered to put a label on what his and Hannibal’s relationship had shifted to, nor did he have the time for such a time consuming act. But the older man had done so with such nonchalance that Will suspected he had labeled it immediately after their first instance of intimacy.

“I’m very sorry to hear that, sir. I’m sure we can have security escort him out of the store right away. May I have a description of the man in question?”

Will excused himself as Hannibal began to describe Franklin to the now composed woman. He shifted the wire basket from his right hand to his left and fished his cell phone from a pocket. He took a few steps away from the counter of the help desk and dialed Jack's number.

"What is it, Graham?"

"I have a stalker, can you start me a restraining order?"

"A stalker? Do you think he may be a suspect that knows what you do for a living?"

"I doubt that, but I've seen him in three different instances since I left Quantico this morning. I ran into him at Dr. Lecter's, he's a patient there and he's been keeping tabs on me ever since."

"Great, this is just what I need, Graham."

"I didn't ask for this, Jack. You know I don't like people, and I'm growing tired of seeing this one more than I care to admit. His name is Franklin, uh-"

He paused, realizing he didn't even know the man's last name. Thankfully Hannibal had finished reporting to the woman at the counter and was approaching him. Will waved his hand at his throat, trying to convince the approaching man not to speak lest Jack hear his voice over the line. Hannibal stilled a few steps from him and retrieved a small pad of paper and a pen from the inner pocket of his suit jacket. He wrote something on the pad before handing it to Will.

"His last name, Will. You know I can't do anything without it."

"It's Froideveaux."

Will's voice caressed the French name with such ease it was just as stirring as his accent. Hannibal tuned out the rest of the conversation in favor of echoing the last name he loathed in his mind. The name had rolled off of Will's tongue as if he was a native to France, not only stirring arousal in the doctor but intrigue as well. He wondered whether Will knew any languages other than English.

"Thanks, Jack. I'll drop by to check on the status and sign any papers I may need to after my lecture on Tuesday."

Will pocketed his phone again before he handed the pad of paper back to Hannibal, their fingers brushing only because Hannibal wanted to see if Will would do it deliberately. He was pleased to find that the younger man fell into his trap and smiled at him.

"I take it Uncle Jack wasn't too thrilled with having yet another thing to deal with."

"Of course not, but I told him it would be even harder to concentrate on work if I had to worry about this."

"Do you typically take up manipulating those around you, Will?"

Will's easy admittance of playing Jack stirred Hannibal's intrigue even more. Will shrugged as he began to walk back to where they had been shopping.

"I get tired of having to get into peoples' minds and Jack not realizing how hard it is to do. I can look at anything or listen to anything and read the motives and inspirations behind it, but I don't have to. And he knows that."

Hannibal hummed a neutral sound, mentally filing Will's penchant for manipulation away from future use. The younger man turned to face him, unsure of what they still needed to gather for their meal that night. Hannibal shocked him by stepping right in front of him and placing a heated kiss on his lips. Warmth flooded both Will's abdomen and his face as a blush blossomed across his cheeks.

"We just need some olives, everything else we need is already gathered."

.:V:.

The wonderful aroma of cooked pasta wafted from the kitchen as Hannibal brought two plates into the dining room. Will was seated facing the entry way that led into the kitchen, so when Hannibal's face momentarily went blank as he entered the room, he noticed. Ever since they had witnessed Franklin get escorted out of the market, Hannibal had been somewhat more open with his emotions than he had been previously.

"That smells delicious."

"It is pan seared bevette with roasted tomatoes, sautéed mushrooms and olives, topped with grilled sheep fillet and a white wine sauce."

Hannibal spoke almost mechanically as he placed a plate in front of Will before rounding the table to place one in front of his seat opposite Will. He smiled as he took his seat.

"I realize that this may be a little heavy for you, considering how the past couple of days have hollowed you slightly, but it won't overwhelm you. Please, enjoy."

"I've managed to eat pretty well, that pizza we made on Sunday lasted me until the day before yesterday."

"Will, it's Friday. You shouldn't be eating leftovers for such a long time."

Will carefully removed a sliver of the most recent teenagers thigh muscle, spun his fork around to gather a few noodles, and collected a mushroom on the end of it. His face lit up when he tasted the delicate sauce, the slight heat to it warming him.

"I would've made something, but I was only home long enough to shower and feed the dogs every time I was permitted a few hours leave. Quantico is a long ride from my house."

"You are always welcome to stay here, Will. I have a very handsome guest room."

.:V:.

Dinner had gone well enough, both of them finishing the meal and then washing the dishes. It had happened as soon as Will had set down the last dish, completely dry onto the counter. Hannibal had launched himself at the younger man, turning to face the man and captured his mouth in an earnest, breath stealing kiss.

Will's back ended up pushed up against a wall as Hannibal wasted no time in beginning to remove the younger man's tweed jacket. His pianist's fingers worked the fabric off of Will's shoulders before it was left to fall to the floor in a haphazard pile. Will's hands grasped tightly at Hannibal's upper arms, reveling in the feel of the muscles working under his own suit jacket.

Will's breath hitched when Hannibal pinned his arms on the wall beside his head, latching his mouth onto the man's neck to place sucking kisses down the length of it. A knee found it's place between Will's legs, supplying a much needed pressure to Will's forming arousal. Will couldn't help the moans that kept tumbling out of him, his throat rumbling with against Hannibal's teasing lips, fueling the man's own growing arousal.

Will bucked his hips against the knee, hoping to increase the friction with movement. A triumphant sound lifted into the air as he was rewarded with hands unbuttoning his shirt, allowing for the searching mouth of Hannibal to lick his way across his collarbone. Will removed his hands from where they were still against the wall to wind his hands around the man's back, pulling him flush against his own body. Hannibal let out a throaty groan at the action, feeling Will's chest through his clothing.

"Hmm, Will, you are getting impatient."

Hannibal whispered into the man's throat. Shadowing his nose along the column creamy column.

"I don't give a damn anymore. We've been interrupted far too many times."

"I couldn't agree more."

Their mouths connected in a frenzied kiss, both men groaning in satisfaction.

Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal finally get some time to themselves. Both good and bad things occur.

Chapter Notes

throws at the angry readers before running away

Will groaned as Hannibal pushed his body flush against his own, pushing his smaller frame into the plush covers atop the guest bed. Hannibal had picked the man up and had carried him to the room, throwing him atop the bed as he ridded himself free of his waist coat, dress shirt, and trousers. Will had scrambled to sit up on the bed, disrobing as well, though he left his boxer shorts on just as Hannibal had. Their bodies were hot against each other, fleetingly causing Will's mind to spin.

The thin layers of Hannibal's spandex undershorts and Will's raggedy boxers were all that separated the two men from being completely bare for the other to see. Will reached out to pull Hannibal's face towards his own for a heated kiss. It didn't last as long as the man had wanted but his complaint turned into a low hum as Hannibal kissed down his jawline, his lips stopping just at the pulse point of his neck.

Will let out a choked moan as teeth sunk into the spot, worrying the skin there until little droplets of blood began to form. The younger man's hands clenched desperately on Hannibal's bare shoulders, little crescent indentations forming beneath the man's nails, eliciting a low hiss from him.

Hannibal soothed his tongue over the abused spot, reveling in the metallic taste of Will's blood as it gathered in his mouth. Will gasped as Hannibal began to suck lightly at the wound, drawing more blood from the puncture marks his teeth had made, hands grasping at his shoulders tighter and tighter as the man ground himself up against Hannibal. It was obvious the effect the rough treatment was having on the younger man as a wet spot gradually spread across the front of his boxers.

The pressure building in his abdomen was becoming too much for him, Will's nails left Hannibal's shoulders in favor of hastily dragging the waistband of his bottoms over his hip bones and off of his body, causing his member to spring free to rest along his stomach. He carelessly kicked the fabric of his bottoms from around his ankles, causing his newly exposed

flesh to press up into Hannibal's stomach, fueling the fire that was already consuming both men.

As he grabbed ahold of himself, Will hissed in satisfaction at finally having pressure applied to the ignored part of his body. He began to pump himself, Hannibal watching as he leaned back just a fraction, blood stained his lips an abused red as he openly fawned over the scene before him.

Will's arms were taut with the effort of pumping himself with abandon. His face was contorted with pure pleasure, his jaw slack as wanton moans and gasps fell from his kiss swollen lips. Will's curly hair was flattened as he threw his head back on the covers, arching his neck as he felt Hannibal's hand engulf his and began to pump along with him.

His panting breaths inflated his chest dramatically as Hannibal's hand completely engulfed him, shoving his own hand from around himself. Hannibal's hand was a fraction larger than his own, warmer from having been latched around his waist. The smooth skin of the good doctor's hands was like heaven to Will, pumping him in slow, hard movements. He skimmed his fingers over the sensitive head, eliciting a high keening sound from the man below him. Will clawed at the covers around him, nearly tearing the silky fabric as he did so.

Hannibal lunged at the man below him, kissing Will full on the lips. Will's tongue was rough against his own, the man trying to convey just how much he was feeling for Hannibal in that moment. Will's hands relaxed their hold on the covers, revealing the tears he had made in the fabric in favor of pulling the fabric of Hannibal's bottoms from around his hips. Will whimpered at the loss of Hannibal's hands on him as the older man shoved the fabric from around his hips and to the floor along with the rest of their clothes.

Before he could even register Hannibal's weight had left him, Will was consumed by the fire that he felt in his abdomen. Hannibal had returned to his place atop Will, aligning their aching members and grabbing ahold of both of them in one of his large hands. A strangled sound left Will's lips to float in the air along with a low groan from Hannibal at the action.

"Fuck, Hannib-aah ah!"

Will's words were stolen from him as Hannibal began to pump his hand around both of them, the foreign feeling overridden by the blinding white that obscured his vision as an orgasm hit the younger man. He panted into the older man's neck, his hands having flown to his back to rake his nails down the expanse of skin as the waves of pleasure from his orgasm washed over him.
Hannibal arched into Will, the feeling of being surrounded by the man he laid his affections stirring the warmth that was consuming him.

A heated kiss was shared before Hannibal removed his hand from around both of them, allowing Will's member to lay against his stomach once again. Will panted as his eyes searched for Hannibal's, not caring what the other might see as their eyes connected. Hannibal gazed into Will's eyes, watching the pure abandon the empath was experiencing in the face of release.

"Please."

“Please what, Will?”

Hannibal’s hand began snaking its way from the man’s hips between his legs. He gently brushed his hands against Will’s already half hard member to gather some of the remains of his orgasm before continuing a lazy path across the man’s skin. His fingers came to rest at the younger man’s entrance, tracing circles around the skin there, hoping to relax Will as much as possible. Will’s breath hitched when he tentatively pressed a smeared fingertip into his entrance.

“Just, be gentle, please.”

Hannibal pressed a kiss to the man’s lips as he thrust his finger into the younger man, the remnants of his orgasm providing a lubricant. Will was surprised at how little the action hurt, his opened his eyes, having screwed them shut in an expectation of pain. His breathing was somewhat labored as his eyes connected with Hannibal’s again. Taking that as a signal to move, Hannibal began to thrust his finger. As soon as Will’s back arched in pleasure, he added another and angled them to brush against the man’s prostate.

“Ah, do that again.”

Hannibal inched his finger away from the spot, his left hand moving to unravel Will’s arms from around his back and pin them above his head atop the covers. Will’s searching eyes found his for a brief moment before he choked out a gasp as Hannibal brushed his fingers against the spot again. Hannibal set a slow, deliberate pace, prompting the steady rhythm of Will’s rocking hips.

Will felt himself harden at the abuse on his prostate, never having experienced such an intoxicating sensation before. Heavy breathing filled the room as Hannibal gazed down at Will lost in pleasure. The empath struggled against Hannibal’s binding hand, red rings blossoming around his wrists as he did so. It was almost enough to bring him to a second release, and as his vision began to dull and his stomach began to coil Hannibal removed his fingers from him completely.

Hannibal reached out to grasp the bottle of lubricant he had hidden beneath the pillow with the hand he had used to hold down Will’s wrists. He quickly prepared himself and positioned himself at Will’s entrance, lightly pressing the tip against it. Will was overcome with the sensation that he was drowning, he was drowning and he would never resurface. Hannibal would make sure of that, he thought, as the man thrust into him before stilling completely, gasping with the sensation of being surrounded by Will.

Will struggled to breath, trying to fill his lungs with much needed air, only to find that he had torn his wrists out from underneath Hannibal’s returned hold and had pulled the man down to him in order to bury his face in the man’s neck.

The pulse his face was pressed into was much calmer than his own, though neither could be considered normal. Hannibal was panting with the effort to not move, while Will was still struggling to regain his breath. He felt like he was suffocating, it was only when a hand caressed his stubble before grasping his face lightly could he take a deep breath, blinking away the tears that had formed in his eyes.

“You need to relax, Will, you’re going to make things worse for yourself.”

“I’m trying. I wasn’t lying before when I said I’ve never been with a man.”

“I know, Will, I know.”

Ernest kisses were scattered on Hannibal’s neck and chest, as Will tried to relax himself as best he could. He shifted to get reach a higher place along the man’s jaw but only succeeded in allowing Hannibal to shift at an angle within him. His breath hitched and a jolt of warmth flooded him. He gasped before biting down on the collarbone in front of him. His rough action spurred Hannibal into action as he began to set a steady pace.

Hands roamed hot skin before resting one rested on Will’s hip and the other beside the man’s head to help provide stability and an anchor. The sound of flesh hitting flesh soon filled the room and as the pain began to subside Will was being washed with wave after wave of pleasure, loud moans echoed off the walls.

There was the shrill sound of Will’s phone ringing, but it was drowned out by the sounds that were beginning to fall from Hannibal’s lips as well. Will raked his nails down the older man’s back as he struggled to gain enough purchase to busk his hips up to meet Hannibal’s own movement. The result was a deeper angle that allowed the man to hit Will’s prostate, causing stars to erupt in the younger man’s vision.

“Harder!”

Will shouted as he felt himself begin to shake from the already forceful thrusting of Hannibal’s hips into his own. The back of his thighs were already quaking from the force of Hannibal’s forward thrusts, his hips stalled as he lost the energy to move his hips to meet Hannibal’s. The jolt in his stomach was hitting him just as fast as his heart was beating, overriding any coherent thoughts of just how many bruises he would have in the morning.

A hand took ahold of his leaking member, furthering him to the release he could feel he was on the brink of. Hannibal latched his mouth onto the wound he had bitten into Will’s neck, he received a tortured moan as he dug his teeth into the sensitive puncture marks he had caused before. Blood blossomed in his mouth, stirring in the older man a sense of possession. Will’s hands fly to tangle themselves in Hannibal’s silky hair; he tugged on the straight locks as he groaned his appreciation of drowning in the pleasure Hannibal was treating him with.

Hannibal aims a steady thrust against the man’s prostate once, another, and again, and again, until Will’s body is shaking with his violent release. Hannibal feels Will’s muscles tighten around his member, just as Will’s legs tighten around his waist. He watches as Will comes onto his stomach, the fluttering of his eyes and the harsh breathing as if he was taking his last breath pushes Hannibal over the edge and his own orgasm hits him as he buries himself deep within Will. His last few thrusts are erratic as his control slips away from him. He’s bitten down on the already bruising spot along the column of Will’s neck in an attempt to level himself.

A deep sigh from below him prompts Hannibal to lift himself up onto his forearms, so he can gaze down at Will. The younger man seemed to be fighting sleep as he struggled to open his

eyes to bring them in contact with Hannibal's. His icy blue eyes were darkened with pleasure and satisfaction, something Hannibal found himself fond of. He leaned down to place a chaste kiss upon the empath's lips before he removed himself.

Will groaned at the loss, though he removed his arms from around Hannibal to allow the man to stand. Hannibal looked down at the state he had put Will in: Will was laying with his limbs sprawled carelessly on the bed, his neck decorated by a still bleeding bite mark, the indentations of teeth obvious upon the abused skin, his wrists were ringed with red from when Hannibal had pinned them above his head. His release was splattered across his torso, stomach still jolting every few moments as the muscles started to relax.

His hair was completely dampened by sweat, though his face was flushed with the remnants of the heat that had been burning through him. Overall, it was a very satisfying scene, Hannibal thought to himself as he let a hand linger on the man's thigh before he moved away from the bed and towards the adjoined bathroom.

Will watched him as he went, grateful for the unrestricted view of the muscles in Hannibal's strong back and backside. His skin was an even tan color that wasn't completely skin tone. When did the man find the time to tan? Will chuckled to himself as he pictured Hannibal in scant clothing as he relaxed in a chair outside in his backyard, a glass of ridiculously complicated lemonade beside him as he read.

"Is everything alright, Will? You haven't gone delusional on me, have you?"

Will wasn't sure why but he began to laugh, the joyous sound bouncing off the walls. He watched as Hannibal cleaned himself with a warm washcloth before he moved to clean Will. Will caught his hand just as it was about to leave his body and pulled the man to him in a heated kiss. He closed his eyes as Hannibal returned the gesture. Both men stilled as the shrill ring of Will's phone sounded again.

With an exasperated groan, Will pushed himself up off the bed. He reached for his boxers and fished for his phone at the same time, only for the fabric of his boxers to be ripped from his hands and replaced with an unsoiled pair of Hannibal's own spandex undershorts. He tossed a shy grin at the man as he pulled them on and answered the phone.

"Hello?"

"Will, oh thank god, I thought you might have been in trouble when you didn't pick up the first time."

"Alana? What, why would I be in trouble?"

"Jack told be about your stalker. He said you ran into him at Hannibal's office initially. I've tried getting ahold of Hannibal to get some background information on him, but he hasn't been answering his office or home phone."

Will turned to face a partially dressed Hannibal as a dismayed sound came from the man. He was frowning at the tears in the covers that Will had caused in their bout of passion. Hannibal

turned a disapproving look towards him before he removed the covers with a flourish of rustling fabric and deposited them into the hamper beside the closest.

“Will?”

“Hmm?”

“Will…are you…with someone?”

“What? Alana you know I’m not the type to do that.”

“You are! Are you with Hannibal? Is that why neither of you were answering your phones. Oh my god, you are.”

Hannibal had let another dismayed sound fall from his lips as he felt the bloodied lines across his back as he had bent double to retrieve his clothing. It had been loud enough for the frantic doctor to hear over the line. Will’s grip on the phone loosened and he struggled to grab the phone as it began to fall. He huffed when he finally got ahold of the phone again.

“Alana, think about what you just said. Tell me how likely it is that you’re right.”

She was quiet for a while before she answered.

“It does seem pretty farfetched. But I can’t deny that it seems rather likely at the moment. I just heard a man groan over the line, Will, and it sounded suspiciously like Hannibal when someone mentions take out.”

“I am rather disgusted by the prospect of take out.”

Hannibal spoke evenly, not even a hint of what had occurred between them winding through his voice, though his accent did sound slightly thicker than usual. Alana gasped audibly over the line and something crashed to the floor where ever she was. There was a muffled curse as she tried to compose herself.

“You can’t go around doing reckless things, Hannibal.” Will scolded lightly as he gathered his shirt from the floor and pulled his arms through the sleeves. He held the phone between his ear and shoulder as he began to button the shirt up. Ignoring the warning look Hannibal was giving him, Will reached for his pants next and began to pull them up his legs.

“I have never once acted recklessly, Will. You should know that by now.”

“I wouldn’t have taken you for the kind to announce us to your former student.”

“That was not reckless, Will. Alana was beginning to suspect us when she heard my dismayed sound at the damage you’ve done to my back.”

Forgetting that he was on the phone, Will retorted with a mild tone of anger as he watched Hannibal retrieve a new shirt from the closet and begin to button and tuck it into the trousers he had picked up from the floor.

“You’re the one that nearly tore my throat out, if anyone should be upset it should be me.”

“Ah, but you weren’t worried about that in the heat of passion. Therefore you argument is rendered invalid.”

Will sputtered as Hannibal approached him and effortlessly took the phone out of his grip.

“Good evening, Alana. Excuse our heated banter, it is simply a disagreement among lovers. Is everything alright?”

Will could hear Alana’s shock through the line, though she quickly composed herself and began to explain how she was simple looking for some background information on his patient so that the restraining order that had been started could be sorted out.

“Of course, Alana. I will glad to meet with Jack on Monday to help further the process. Is there anything else I could aid you with at the moment?”

Will hesitantly took the phone as it was offered to him.

“You and I need to have a conversation, Will. I’ll be visiting you after your lecture on Monday.”

The call disconnected before Will could muster up a response.

.:V:.

Will sighed as he gathered his bag from the passenger seat of his car. He rifled through it to check that he had remembered to gather the papers he had assigned collected on Friday. The stack of papers were settled alongside his laptop, red pen marks decorating them as a result of his grading. He had spent the better half of his weekend grading the papers after he had departed from Hannibal’s on Friday night.

Hannibal had assured him that Alana would act like an adult and keep her findings to herself. Will had been hesitant to leave for worry of finding Jack waiting for him at home after getting a telling call from the woman. But Will was only greeted by his dogs as he had entered his home later that night. He was reassured again that Alana had upheld her part of the bargain that she and Hannibal had made when Hannibal called him on Saturday.

He and Alana had discussed the situation over dinner that night at Hannibal’s. Will had been a little put off knowing that the two of them had been discussing him without him being any the wiser, but had been assured it was strictly friendly talk. She had agreed to keep her silence on the matter unless issues began to arise as a result of it. Will had been a little miffed to hear Hannibal’s chuckle as he relayed a congratulations to him over the phone from the woman.

Will rubbed at his face as he closed his bag and reached for the handle beside him. He pushed his door open and stepped out into the dull sunlight of an early Monday morning. He shouldered his bag before shutting the door and turning to face the building he was spending more and more time at, only to come face to face with a nervous Franklin. Will’s hand

immediately flew to the holster attached to his right hip. Franklin took a few steps back as he eyed the gun under Will's gray blazer. He raised his arms in a placating manner to show that he didn't have anything with him.

"I'm just here to apologize to you, Mr. Graham."

"How did you find out my last name?"

"A friend told me."

Will noticed the way that the man's eyes flitted to something behind him. He removed the gun from its holster and clicked the safety off as he spun around to face another man. He was tall, gangly and seemed to be the complete opposite of Franklin. He was holding a knife in his left hand and an angry look upon his sunken features.

"Franklin told me that your weakness was knifes. Overheard your old man asking about the stab wound you got a while back. We figured it wouldn't cause as much damage as a gun but still manage to get the point across."

"What point? That you two are nothing more than petty bullies?"

Will put his back to his car, allowing both Franklin and the man wielding the knife to be in his line of sight. He was facing the whole of the parking lot, though no one would be arriving until a quarter to his lecture, leaving him to sort this mess out alone. He knew Jack and the others were already there, he could see their cars parked and already beginning to shine in the increasing heat of the day.

"Dr. Lecter needs to learn a lesson. He won't befriend someone as intelligent as my brother, yet he'll willingly associate himself with an unstable nobody like you."

"This is about Hannibal refusing to be your friend? How childish can you be?"

Will kept the gun aimed on the armed man as he spared a glance at Franklin. The large man was pale as he watched Will shift his feet. The same dark glint that had been in his eyes the day Hannibal denied his invitation was there again, Will discovered as he chanced a glance at the man's eyes. He quickly averted his attention to the other man as a shoe scuffed the ground.

The man had taken a step towards him, hoping to make Will feel cornered more than he already was. The knife has been shifted from his left hand to his right and had been lifted slightly. Suddenly the man lunged at him. Will fired a shot at the man, the bullet skimming the man's torso. He grunted in pain but otherwise ignored the wound as he struggled forward still. He brought the knife down on Will as he began to fall to the ground, the blade embedding itself into Will's stomach.

The gun clattered to the ground as Will shouted out, the man twisted the blade before he staggered upright. Franklin was immediately at his side, helping to support him as they fled the scene. Will grunted in pain as he leaned heavily against the side of his car, he slid down the expanse of it, smearing blood along it as he did so. Will tried to reach into his pocket for

his phone as he tried to staunch off the flow of blood leaking from where the knife was still embedded into his stomach.

His bloodied hands were too slippery for the buttons on the phone and it clattered to the ground beside him. Will realized he was hyperventilating and he had begun to shake despite the heat of the day. He groaned as pain washed over him as the knife moved in him, blood soaking his black and white plaid shirt. His hearing began to ring and his vision began to gray around the edges as he spotted someone coming out of the doors and out into the parking lot.

The faint sound of heels clicking on the ground told him it was either Beverly or Alana. Will called out to them, hoping they would hear him. His shout seemed to be both a blessing and a curse as the person turned to look for the source of the sound but caused the blade to shift again. Will shouted in pain as he felt the blade rip against something new even as a fleeting feeling of thankfulness warmed him.

“Will? Will! Oh my god, Will. What happened?”

Beverly cleared the distance between them as fast as she could. She kneeled down beside him, not caring that the knees of her pants were getting dirtied in the growing pile of blood around Will. She reached into her pocket to get her phone and dialed the emergency number while she reached out to hold Will’s left hand. He squeezed her hand, getting blood over it as he did so, but not caring because someone was there with him.

“It’s gonna be alright, Will. I’m calling an ambulance. Everything it going to be alright.”

She squeezed his hand back as he tried to muster up a response.

“What happened, Will?”

“I was ambushed. Two guys were waiting for me. They knew I was going to be here today.”

His speech was slurred with both his accent and from the swelling that had begun to settle in his cheek, he realized as he ran his tongue along the inside of his cheek. He tasted blood, he must’ve bitten it when he had fallen against his car.

“Okay, shush, that’s enough for now. Yes? Hello? There’s been a stabbing in the parking lot of the FBI Academy here in Quantico. It’s bad, he’s losing a lot of blood. ”

The phone fell to the floor as Will shouted out in pain again, scaring her. She reached for the phone, putting it on speaker as she removed the blood spattered glasses from Will’s face. She put them in the pocket of her jeans as she leaned closer to Will to take his pulse at his neck. Her fingers were trembling slightly as she did so, telling Will that she was worried for him.

“I’m losing him! There’s no way to staunch the flow of blood.”

“An ambulance in on their way, they should be there in less than ten minutes. We’re located just a few blocks away, just make sure he stays awake, ma’am.”

“Okay. You hear that, Will. You’ve gotta stay with me.”

Will nodded his head, not quite sure that he was hearing things clearly. There was a loud ringing in his ears as he struggled to breath. His breath hitched as Beverly dialed a second number on her phone. He groaned as the knife delved deeper into his stomach at the action he clenched his hand around Beverly's.

"Will? Will!"

"Beverly, what's happened?"

"Jack! It's Will, I was going out to my car to get something and he was laying on the ground by his car. He's been stabbed and it doesn't look good. He's lost a lot of blood."

"Shit. I'm coming, tell him I'm coming."

"Did you hear that, Will? Jack is on his way, he'll be here in just a moment. He's worried about you, Will. Stay with me, Will. You've gotta stay with me."

Her voice was wavering, some words getting through to Will while most of them were just a dull buzzing. He blinked furiously as he tried to focus on her worried face. She was panicking, that much Will could tell in his wavering state. He squeezed her hand again as he heard the muffled sound of a car pulling into the parking lot, the doors to the building slamming open, and sirens in the distance. There was a clatter of footsteps as he glimpsed Jack, Brian, Jimmy, and Alana running towards them. His eyes were getting heavy and he struggled to keep them open.

He felt another person kneel down beside him on his right. He heard Alana's voice soothing him he tried to keep his eyes open long enough to read her expression. She was pale, worry evident
on her features as she thought better of reaching out to him.

A hurried conversation wafted over him as he tried to concentrate of staying awake. A car door slamming a few spots away from them cut the conversation short followed by rushed footsteps and a melodic accented voice punctuated the silence. Will tried to open his eyes as he heard Hannibal's voice asking what happened. The worried tone was soothing to Will and he took a deep breath to try and even his breathing, only to grunt out in pain.

Will tried to call out to Hannibal, though he wasn't sure how well it had worked out. He felt someone kneel down in front of him and reach out to unbutton his shirt at the collar and all the way down. He shouted out as a small tug on the fabric of his shirt tugged at the knife. The melodic, accented voice spoke again in what Will could only assume was assurance. There was a general intake of breath as everyone gasped, Hannibal had shoved the edges Will's shirt aside to expose the wound. Panic hit him as he remembered the night he had spent with Hannibal on a few days ago, he still had the marks that Hannibal had given him and he began to hyperventilate again. He could feel his muscles quiver as he heard the distant sirens as suddenly as if they had appeared out of thin air.

There was a large hand cradling his face for a few moments until a loud conversation broke out. All of the voices were making him dizzy and he scrunched his eyes shut at the onslaught of overly loud noises. Will tried to follow the melodic voice that he knew belonged to

Hannibal, only to hear the voice contorted with a twinge of anger. He furrowed his brow at that, what could possibly be making Hannibal angry? His confusion was overridden by someone pressing close to his left side.

“Will, the ambulance is here. I’m gonna go with you, is that alright?”

Beverly’s voice suddenly sounded like it was underwater but Will nodded as he felt her hand squeeze his again. He weakly returned the gesture only to find himself being swallowed by darkness.

Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

Will has to deal with teasing and the denial of kisses.

Chapter Notes

gently places down in front of agitated readers

I hope this resolves all of your worries

cocoons self in blankets and begins writing the next chapter

He was lying down on a plush bed, that much Will was aware of. There was a conversation going on between muted voices and a steady pressure on the bed beside him. He tried to open his eyes, but his eyelids were too heavy. He tried to focus on the voices instead. One of them was melodic, accented. While the other was gruff and seemed to be angry, another softer voice that had to belong to a woman entered the conversation followed by the sound of clicking heels.

“I assure you Agent Crawford, any and all relations between us are within the moral obligations I made when I became a psychiatrist.”

“Jack, he’s finally found someone who accepts him. Hannibal was never officially his psychiatrist and you know that. This whole situation is a matter of morals, you put him back in the field with the supervision of a professional you didn’t even get authorization for.”

“I got authorization, Dr. Bloom. Do not mistake me.”

“Jack, it was more for your peace of mind that Will’s. You can’t deny that!”

“After years of lecturing, the first murderer he comes across his shot ten times! I was perfectly justified in trying to find my peace of mind for having put him out there.”

“Perhaps this is a matter of control over Will, Agent Crawford. He is your pony and after losing one already you are hesitant to allow another one free range.”

“I let him life his life as he sees fit, Dr. Lecter. Just because I’m questioning the legality of his newfound relationship with you does not mean that I am struggling with the sheer lack of control I have in the matter.”

Will could feel his heart flutter in his chest, like a bird that was trying to escape from a cage it knew there was no way out of. He took a deep breath to try and settle down, to no avail. The dull beeping that had been background noise became blaringly loud, drowning out the voices. His eyes flew open only for him to be greeted by the stag that normally haunted his sleep. He shouted out at the close proximity of the animal, it's antlers pressing painfully into his torso just as it's all-knowing eyes bore into his own.

"Will, please open your eyes."

Will jolted in the bed, his arms tensing as he felt the heavy weight of his eyelids vanish from before his eyes. Plastic IVs and tubes created sore spots in his arms as he tried to relax them, Will really hated having stuff stuck into his skin. He was momentarily blinded by bright, fluorescent lights as he realized he was in a hospital and he struggled to keep his eyes open against them. His eyes adjusted and he looked to his right, where the stag had been just moments before.

But it was Hannibal standing there, leaning over him. Will couldn't help the relieved expression that briefly lit his features before taking in the expression of controlled worry upon the older man's features. His eyes were guarded, yet there was something eerily similar in them that pulled the stag to the forefront of his mind. The jolt Will had begun to associate with Hannibal reverberated through his middle, warming him in the cold room. Will felt the faintest brush of hair on his fingers as he tore his gaze away from Hannibal's to his hands.

There was nothing brushing against them. They were lying still at his sides, he moved to feel the thick wrappings around his torso, marveling at the blossoms of pain that were a result of his prodding touches. He moved to sit up but suddenly stilled as a choked sound fell from his lips. A deep stab of pain had reverberated in his stomach at such a swift action.

"He needs another dose of morphine. Will, have you had trouble responding to intensive pain killers in the past?"

Hannibal's voice was politely curious, giving no hint to the anger he was suppressing over Jack's continued attitude. He wasn't too thrilled with having to explain the innocence of the relationship he had partnered into with Will yet again to the man. It was a simple matter, though unusual. Hannibal flipped through the chart that had been hanging off the rack at the foot of the hospital bed, confirming that the dose of morphine given to Will was indeed rather low for his weight.

"I've built up a tolerance from my daily endeavors with ibuprofen."

"I'll alert the nurses then. They have you down for a dose more suited for a person of half your weight. That paired with your tolerance should warrant you a stronger one. Is the pain an echo of the initial stabbing or a different sensation?"

Will shut his eyes as the pain finally subsided enough to become a dull ache. He leaned back into the marginally propped up bed and let out a careful sigh. When he opened his eyes again he finally took notice of Jack and Alana in the room. Jack was standing a few feet away to his right, stiff as he watched Will on the bed, his expression a combination of worry and anger.

While Alana was seated carefully on the foot of his bed as composed as her worry would let her be.

“Will.”

Will shook his head, the action jerky as he tried to rid himself of the face of the man who attacked him, reliving the moment over and over again inside his mind. The pure anger on the man’s face had taken him by surprise, it was as if by being friendly with Hannibal was a great insult to him. The man’s sallow face transitioned to Franklin’s, the fear of his expression overflowing and filling Will up like a water balloon. He felt like he was going to burst and then become nothing, something that simply had been but no longer was.

He could feel himself shaking as he clenched his eyes shut, his arms aching as they tensed at his sides with the effort he was fisting his hands around the covers of the bed. There was a sudden weight on his shoulder and he jumped at the contact. His eyes flew open as he jerked away from the touch, only to ignite the pain in his middle again. He cried out as he realized it was just Hannibal placing a comforting hand on his shoulder, hoping to bring him back to the present.

“Ha-Hannibal.”

“It’s alright, Will.”

Jack watched the scene from the sidelines as it played out. It was obvious he wasn’t thrilled in the slightest that Will had finally found an anchor to attach himself to. Sure there was a small level of relief, but it was still a new concept to Will, there was no telling how long it would last. Jack didn't want to have to deal with the consequences if it didn't work out. If anything it was more worrying to the man, given the subject that had become the anchor. He watched silently as Hannibal pressed the call button for a nurse after he had calmed Will down enough for the man to lie back and relax. There was an intimacy in watching someone calm down the subject of their affection, Jack mused as he watched Will reach out a hand to Hannibal, the man stretching out his own for him to take it.

He could feel Alana watching his from the corner of her eye, he nodded to her as he noticed the placating hand she had placed atop Will’s right ankle over the covers of the bed. She had known, the minute crinkling at the corners of her eyes had given it away. She had known that Will and Hannibal had transitioned from their carefully constructed relationship into the new uncharted territory of being a couple. She hadn’t even bothered to deny it when he had confronted Hannibal as they whisked Will away in the ambulance and they stood around the parking lot.

Hannibal had been hesitant to answer any questions about the fading bite marks that had decorated Will’s neck and chest. The distinct, but fading bruises along the injured man’s sides had been suspiciously the same size as the doctor’s hands. Brian and Jimmy had been quick to absolve the tension by jokingly mentioning that at least Will had experienced a good night before he had been stabbed. That was when Jack had realized the motive behind Hannibal’s rather…involved handling of Will as they waited for the ambulance to arrive. Sighing, Jack took a step forward, effectively catching everyone’s attention.

“Will, we need to discuss the particulars of the attack.”

“Now is not the time, Agent Crawford. Will is having trouble coping with the memories; we don’t need him talking about it.”

“I agree with Hannibal.” Alana piqued as she stood from her seated position. There was a warning look on her features as she crossed her arms over her chest. She went into professional mode when she spoke next, hoping to gain Will a few moments or days of silence in order to think about what happened. “The trauma he’s experienced is too fresh in his mind. He needs time to sort out how he’s feeling and to recover a bit before he should be asked about it.”

Jack ignored her and pointedly stared at Will’s face, he took it as a small victory that the empath didn’t have his glasses to hide under at the moment. Will's eyes were wonderfully expressive even when the man had trouble voicing the way he was feeling or what he was thinking.

“It’s really vivid, Jack. There isn’t much more I can tell you, I’m sure you’ve pulled the surveillance tapes already.”

“I have, but that doesn’t give me your perspective on the matter. I want to know why you were targeted.”

Will stole a glance at Jack’s forehead before looking back down at the plastic bracelet informing people of his name clasped around his wrist. Hannibal took a distinctive step away from the bed as a nurse entered the room. She busied herself with setting up a shot to add to the remaining half of a unit of lactated ringers that was being slowly dripped into the line of Will’s IV.

“I am fearful that I may be the cause of such behavior from Franklin.”

Will’s closed his eyes at the doctor’s words, his jaw clenching as the woman warned him she was administering the morphine into the IV.

“Don’t give me another reason to doubt you, Dr. Lecter.”

“It was completely unintentional on my part. But it does tend to happen with Mr. Froideveaux, he develops a fixation, or an obsession if you will, regarding his therapists. I am one in series of referrals. I was beginning to sort out the paperwork with another of my colleagues as he began to conveniently happen across me outside of operating hours and the controlled setting of my office. This violent behavior concerning Will only fuels my decision to do so, though I doubt you will let him walk free anytime soon.”

“You’re damn right I won’t let him. He deliberately stalked, confronted, and attacked an FBI Agent.”

Hannibal inwardly bristled at the name of Will’s attacker as well as the vulgar language on Jack’s part. Hannibal hadn’t been too pleased to find Will in a bloody mess as he pulled up into the parking lot of the Bureau. He had deliberately left his records within sight in his car

for Franklin and his brother to converge on just yesterday as he ran his errands. He had expected the two men to actually organize a plan of attack once they were aware of Will's scheduled lecture on Tuesday, not simply rush after the man as soon as they had gained the information that they did.

Hannibal frowned as he watched Will's eyes turn bleary as the higher dose he requested began to take effect in the man's blood stream. Will's shoulders had visibly relaxed and he was watching the scene quietly from his spot on the bed. Hannibal offered him a small smile when he noticed the man had sought out eye contact. Once the nurse moved away from the bed and exited the room, he resumed his spot beside Will, his hand already reaching for a searching one.

"I have all the information that you can legally give me at this point. Until I can get a signed warrant, I'll work with that." Jack crossed the room to the closed door, the nurse was right to assume that the conversation going on as she worked was private. Jack mentally applauded her for her courtesy as he turned back to look at Will one last time.

It was obvious the he was succumbing to the drug administered to him, the quiet yet not characteristically twitchy manner in which he regarded the room proving as much.

"You'll recover just fine, Will. You did the last time you were injured in the field and you'll do it now. I've given you the next couple of weeks off, call me if you remember anything inherently important."

Will nodded at the words, glad he was being given a chance to recover over what happened without having to demand the time off like he had been forced to do when he first returned to the field and killed Hobbs. Will noticed the last look Jack had shared with Alana before he left the room, though the drug was severely distorting his thoughts.

"Go to sleep, Will. I will be here when you wake up."

Hannibal smoothed his left hand over the man's fringe, feeling the soft curls of his hair beneath his fingers. Will tried to return his miniscule grin before he had let the drug take over him, the action striking him as both soothing and mildly alarming.

"I appreciate your presence, Alana." Hannibal spoke as he crossed the room to move a chair from against the wall to beside Will's bed. The woman smiled softly as she watched him, glad that he had chosen to accept Will's romantic overtures whereas she had denied them. "Jack respects your opinions just as much as he previously did with mine."

"He still respects your opinions, Hannibal. I just think he's a little taken aback by the shift in yours and Will's relationship, to be honest."

"I recall that you were as well, when you first found out." Hannibal tossed her a mildly teasing grin as he crossed his legs at the knees and leaned back in his chair just the slightest.

"I'll admit to that." Alana moved to retrieve her bag and cardigan from table near the door. "It isn't every day that you call your professional interest's phone only to be greeted by your mentor's voice."

“That is true.”

“He’ll be alright, he’s got you to look over him. He tends to waiver from his antibiotic regimen every time he’s assigned one, keep that in mind as he goes through recovery.”

“I will. Farewell, Alana, I’ll send an invitation to dinner the first night our dear Will is cleared of bed rest.” Hannibal allowed his lips to form a polite grin as he watched the woman grip Will’s ankle one last time before leaving the room.

He let a frown mar his handsome features as the door clicked behind her.

He truly was not happy with the rash behavior that Franklin had acted in. Something needed to be done about that, he decided as he gathered his record book from his coat pocket, the coat having been draped over the arm of his chair. He had initially brought it along with him to inform Jack of Franklin’s scheduled sessions, but now he crossed the information out with even, thick lines.

.:V:.

“Good morning, cher, how ya' doin’?” Beverly’s voice chimed from the doorway as she entered the hospital room. She had tried her best to imitate the accent Will had displayed after his attack, though she hadn’t been too thrilled with the setting she discovered it in, it was still entertaining to her. She had always associated a very precise image with Will, nothing regarding a mid-Southern accent.

“Oh no.”

Will quickly sat up in his bed, the cushions propping him up helping him in just the slightest as a horrified expression overtook his features. He watched as a bright smile broke out on the oriental features of the woman’s face as she entered the room with a small wrapped package in her grasp. He groaned as he leaned back onto the plush pillows, ignoring the light chuckle falling from Hannibal’s lips as he watched the scene from a chair beside the bed.

“That’s right, I found out about your dirty little secret.”

“Please don’t say that it’s-“

“It’s kinda cute actually.”

Will brought his hand up to rub at his face, the conversation not doing well to expel his exhaustion. He had been pouting in the hospital bed for two days, not having been cleared for release in light of the severity of his wounds. The nurses had taken it upon themselves to clean and watch over the rather deep bite marks upon his neck as well, much to the embarrassment of Will. Hannibal had greeted him with a teasing lilt the afternoon he had returned to the hospital after the first bandage that had been placed over the nearly week old bruise he had caused, the situation had humored him.

“Come on, Will. I’m just trying to lighten the mood. You scared the crap out of me the other day.”

“Yeah, sorry about that. I was just glad someone was passing by, I couldn’t exactly dial the numbers on my phone.”

Beverly situated herself on the foot of Will’s bed, her high heeled boots dangling over the edge as she sat as if she were side saddle on a horse. She smiled at the non-pulsed look Will was tossing her as she placed the wrapped package she had brought with her in his lap. Will eyed the package suspiciously, wondering if it was the clack and ball thing she had joked about giving him a few months ago. He voiced his concern out loud, earning a laugh from Beverly and a politely curious look from Hannibal.

“Nah, she thought better of that since you didn’t start the conflict this time.” Brian entered the room with a cup of steaming coffee from the closest coffee place to the hospital. He grinned fleetingly at Will as he moved to stand at the foot of the bed, slightly to the left in order to not block the door from Will’s line of sight. “But it isn’t the bullets either or the knife they pulled from your stomach, like I suggested.”

“I’m really hesitant to unwrap it then, if all my guesses are wrong.”

“I find it funny,” Beverly laughed as Will picked up the offending package with a grimace. It didn’t feel like anything at all other than the wrappings and a light, almost nonexistent weight. He glanced up at Hannibal, Beverly, and Brian taking in the way there were all watching him. He sighed before beginning to rip the paper apart where it had been taped down.

“You’re one of those guys, huh?”

Will ignored her as he pushed aside the wrappings enough to spy a bright red fabric. His curiosity completely enticed, he unwrapped the thing completely only to come face to face with a crawfish beanie baby. Will felt all the emotion leave his face as he stared into the beady eyes sown into the face of the plush toy. He brought a hand up push his glasses up onto his forehead only to realize that he had taken them off just before his visitors walked in. He rubbed at his face instead, an exasperated smile blossoming on his lips.

Beverly and Brian broke into quiet laughter as Will chuckled nervously. He hadn’t seen that coming at all. Beside him, Hannibal let out a chuckle as well, genuinely finding humor in the situation. It helped to see Will smile after pouting for two whole days straight.

“I’m glad you like it.”

“I do, thanks.”

“You really had us worried, Will.”

“Yeah, we were told they lost you on the operating table. Jimmy started to regret his snide remarks towards you even though they were made in good jest.” Brian interjected.

“I was worried too. I forgot how painful it was to be stabbed.”

“You’re lucky none of your organs were damaged. It’s easier to recover from a muscle tear than a suffering organ.” Beverly crossed her arms over her chest, her hair shifting to drape over her back at the action. Will recalled Hannibal brushing his fingers through his hair during his first day there at the hospital, his mind bringing forth the image of the teen victim the Ripper had run his hands through. Will closed his eyes against the image.

Hannibal stood from his seat to check the chart on the table beside the head of the bed. Will wasn’t scheduled for another dose of medication until that evening, he asked if Will could manage to wait that long for his minimal pain to be relieved.

“Yeah, I’ll be fine. Things are just catching up with me.”

Beverly looked from Hannibal to Will, her mind making the connection. Brian stood there quietly at the foot of the bed, sipping from his coffee, none the wiser about the revelation Beverly was experiencing,

“Jack will get over it, eventually.” Beverly consoled as uncrossed her arms and reached for the discarded wrappings next to Will’s legs. She smiled at Hannibal before momentarily locking eyes with Will and smiling at him as well. Will nodded at her statement while Brian contemplated over what she could mean, not quite following the shift of conversation. Hannibal inclined his head to her in a polite manner, silently thanking the woman for her support.

“Well, we just came by to give that to you.” Beverly stood up from her spot on the bed and moved to place a comforting hand on Will’s knee. Hannibal’s eyes followed the movement before he averted his eyes to take in the casual acceptance Will was exhibiting. Will momentarily caught Hannibal’s watching eye before bidding Beverly and Brian goodbye.

“You seem very relaxed around Miss Katz.”

“Yeah, she’s the least judgmental out of the team Jack’s put me on.”

“I wonder if you’ve noticed her interest in you. It seems mildly platonic with undercurrents of sexualized awareness.”

“You have nothing to worry about, Hannibal.” Will looked to the man, serious though there was a teasing lilt to his words. He fingered the plush toy in his hands before placing it on the small table between the edge of the bed and Hannibal. He situated himself into a more comfortable sitting position, expecting Hannibal to present him with the meal he’s brought with him soon.

“I am not worried, Will. I was merely making an observation based on your interaction.”

Hannibal made to get up from his seat and Will reached out to grasp the man’s arm. A light tug brought Hannibal’s face close to Will’s and he captured the older man’s lips with his own. The kiss was short but it left Will panting with the effort it had taken to straighten his posture. Hannibal gently placed a hand on Will’s chest and pushed him back into the covers.

“You shouldn’t be doing reckless things, Mr. Graham.”

“I couldn’t help myself. You are quite kissable, Dr. Lecter.”

“I believe that is the first time I’ve been told that.” Hannibal mused as he reached into the insulated lunch box had he had taken habit to bringing to the hospital. He neatly folded the long, thick strap to lay beside it before unzipping it. He pulled out two soup bowls and set one up on the table beside the cooler, the other on the small, movable tray attached to the hospital bed and maneuvered it closer to Will.

Will sighed in content as the scent of beef chanko nabe wafted over him. He watched out of the corner of his eye as Hannibal served himself and then Will, making sure to serve Will a more helpful ratio of broth to solids.

.:V:.

“I’ve warned the dogs not to bombard you, but seeing as they haven’t seen you in a few days they may do so anyway.”

Hannibal warned as he carefully helped Will to stand from his spot in the passenger seat of his sleek Bentley. Will had been released from the hospital only under the condition that he have a constant caretaker for a week followed by a daily checkup at his own residence for another. Naturally, Hannibal had offered Will his care and guest bedroom. Will had been genuinely thankful, but he had just wanted to get out of the hospital before the nurses started to tell him stories about their children. That would’ve been too personal a relationship with someone who had seen him naked.

“They’ll smell the wound, so they shouldn’t be too overbearing.”

Will allowed Hannibal’s hand to hover around his waist as the two men crossed the front yard. Will placed a heavy hand on the railing leading up the steps onto the porch when he came up to them and heaved a sigh before climbing the steps. Hannibal’s hovering hand became more pronounced as Will paused to let out the breath he had been holding as a sting of pain blossomed before disappearing.

“I just want to stop hurting, my head is already killing me, and I just want to sleep.”

Will didn’t care how childish he sounded as his voice heightened in a slight complaint, he just wanted to be able to relax. Hannibal reassured him that he could sleep all afternoon until Alana arrived for dinner later that evening at Hannibal’s. But until they reached his house, Will would have to deal with packing his things and bidding his dogs goodbye for a few days. Hannibal had informed him the car’s jostling motion was too much for the injured man to endure each day and that he would take over the task of watching over the dogs alongside the neighbor that Will typically called on.

Will was about to mumble a less than polite thought when he noticed the paint around the lock on his door was chipped.

“Someone’s tried to break into my house.”

He spied the marks of either a screwdriver or a more specific lock picking tool as he neared the door, the grooves left behind becoming more prominent. Will fingered the scored wood, being careful to not get a splinter. He looked at Hannibal over his shoulder as he reached for his keys in his pocket.

Will sighed with a short lived relief as the door unlocked as he was surrounded by curiously nudging noses. He reached out to grasp the doorway as he lowered a hand to run along each of the dogs as they bypassed him and went out into the yard. A sigh of relief wafted into the air as all of the dogs seemed to be in good health, no injuries accounted for.

“Shall I call Jack?”

Hannibal placed a light hand on Will’s back as he sounded a warning to the dogs before stepping over the threshold and into his home. Will looked around the room for any signs of disturbances, his hand trained on the gun in his holster. He wasn’t cleared for shooting due to the rebuke guns typically delivered and his torso wasn’t quite ready to deal with the abuse, but Will would be damned if he didn’t get a shot at anyone who dared to break into his home. His dogs lived here, they had run away from settings that weren’t safe and Will would be damned if he let his home become unsafe for them.

“Would you mind checking the rest of the house?” Will asked as he turned to face Hannibal. His left arm was cradled loosely around his middle as watched the dogs frolic around the yard through the expansive windows that made up the front of his house. “I don’t really think I should be strutting around with a gun when it feels like my sutures came loose.”

“Of course. You should take a seat, Will. I’ll clean and tend to the wound when I finish checking the house and after I call Jack.”

Will took a seat in one of the lower backed chairs positioned around the living room. He had a view out of the window even as he leaned back in the chair and rested his head against the backing. He closed his eyes in a long blink as he tried to sort out everything in his head. Will had glimpsed the figure of the stag on more than one occasion as they had driven from the Baltimore State Hospital to Wolf Trap. The first time Will had pressed his fingers into his eyes hard enough to see stars in hopes of waking himself up from what had to be a nightmare. But he had been as awake as he was now.

It wasn’t much longer until Hannibal had returned to the living room. He was silent as he carried a note between the folds of his handkerchief. There was a messy scrawl decorating the paper, Will noticed, as Hannibal gingerly extended the note and handkerchief out to him. Will didn’t take it but carefully read the words written upon the paper as Hannibal held it out to him, his arms stationary on the arms of the chair, stiff with the lingering feel of tubs and IVs.

“They couldn’t get in because my dogs kept them at bay.”

“Indeed.This was tacked to your back door. Your soldiers have protected the castle while the king was away.”

Will nodded jerkily in agreement, angered by the fact that the dogs had to fight against intruders in their new safe haven of a home. Will listened to the even conversation between Hannibal and Jack over the phone. Hannibal's voice held a hint of venom as he bid Jack a good evening and ended the call.

"I take it Jack still isn't on board with us."

"Of course not, he is blinded by the very prejudice he claims to not have."

"I think he's more worried that I've jumped into a relationship with the only psychiatric figure I've allowed into my life."

"Do you feel as if you've jumped into it?"

Will turned his eyes away from the window to connect them with Hannibal's. There was a glint of worry deep within them that Will was a stranger in witnessing. The older man had taken a step back from him, mechanically playing the simultaneous role of a psychiatrist and concerned lover.

"No. No,no, I think Jack thinks I jumped into it. I know I didn't."

Hannibal rewarded Will with a chaste kiss for his answer, kneeling down to be at the sitting man's level. When the kiss broke, Hannibal's hands began to unbutton the top he had aided Will in dressing in just a few hours ago as they prepared to leave the hospital.

Will's eyes flew open only for them to slide to half-mast as Hannibal's large hands began to faintly knead the skin that wasn't obstructed by the wrapped bandages around his torso. Gentle kisses were placed along Will's jaw to elicit quiet moans and small jerks of his hands as he fought the urge to raise his arms and tousle Hannibal's hair.

Will's breath hitched when Hannibal's fingers undid the knot that kept his bandages secured around his body and the not-quite-there pressure has subsided. Hannibal hushed Will before the man could get too worked up, a fast heart rate and pumping blood wasn't a good thing to experience so soon after having dealt with trauma so close to the organs.

"The wound doesn't look too agitated, though I would suggest another round of antibiotics." Hannibal mused aloud as he urged Will to sit straight and unraveled the bandages from around his body. Will's chest was pale just like the rest of him, though it was more honed than would be suggested through Will's shabby clothing. The empath wasn't ripped by any means, but he did have a fair amount of muscle that hinted at a heavy running regime at one point in time. Will was a runner, that much had been obvious to Hannibal the moment he had met him.

"I don't need any more antibiotics, they make me feel like my nerves are on heightened alert."

"That's because they are doing their job, my dear Will. Alana told me of your distaste for them. It would be unfortunate, though not entirely dreary should I have to convince you to take them."

“What are you going to do, deny me sex? I haven’t even been cleared for walking long distances, let alone sex.”

The mention of sex didn’t seem to agitate Will as it had done a week ago, he was more accepting of the term and what it implied now that they had hurdled over that aspect of their relationship. Hannibal leaned in to place a kiss to Will’s lips, taking his bottom lip in between his own and worrying it. Will gasped and couldn’t fight the urge to run his hands through Hannibal’s silky hair. The older man took ahold of Will’s wrists and pulled them from his hair just as he broke the kiss.

“No, but I would go as far as to deny you kissing.”

Will sputtered at Hannibal’s words, not quite believing the truth behind them. Seeing the unwavering stern expression upon the older man’s face, Will leaned back into the back of the chair as Hannibal began to clean the wide, four inch gash that was sown shut just below his bottommost left rib. His hands left Will’s body for an instant as the man shuffled around in the bag at his feet for another salve to decrease scarring.

“I’ll take the damn antibiotics,” Will mumbled a while later as Hannibal applied new bandages around his torso.

“Good, I don’t think either of us would have liked the alternative if you didn’t.”

Hannibal leaned in as he knotted the bandages and began to button Will’s shirt up again. His lips were warm against Will’s chapped ones as they shared a kiss. This time Hannibal let Will’s fingers tangle in his hair when the younger man had reached out for it, a small smirk playing upon his features.

Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

Will's thoughts are racing, he's making leaps even he can't explain.

Chapter Notes

updates chapter after a really stressful week

here you go, readers. a new chapter as promised. things will begin to pick up in the next one

scurries off to fangirl over new, legit flower crown photos and to write the next chapter

Hannibal rounded the hallway of the second floor towards the stairs and Will’s room, which was the last before the landing. He knocked softly on the door only to be greeted by loud snoring.

Smirking minutely to himself, Hannibal pushed the door open and entered. The room was indeed handsome, as he had described to will just little over a week ago. A rich, mocha brown was painted over the walls. Accented by dark forest greens curtains and bed covers paired dark mahogany furniture. The large four poster bed was pushed against the opposite wall, two small two drawer bedside tables framing the bed between long, paneled windows.

To the left was the door that led into a walk in closet, equipped with Hannibal’s spare suits and the clothes that Will had deemed clean enough to bring along with him. To his right was a collection of two dark green upholstered chairs and corner bookshelf. In the right corner of the room was a large alcove that linked the bathroom to the main room, though the lights were out and sunlight was streaming dully in from it.

Hannibal moved to take one of the seats by the bookcase, leaning back in his chair as he watched Will slumber peacefully with the aid of his pain killers and antibiotics. He had deemed it late shortly after having desert with Alana the previous evening during their shifted conversation in the study below on the first floor. The woman had been graceful, taking the cue for her departure with a smile and well wishes towards the both of them.

Hannibal had entertained the thought that Will had dismissed her in favor of more intimate conversation, but Will had genuinely meant he wanted to sleep. After sleeping most of the

afternoon before their guest had arrived, Will had seemed to restore only a margin of his usual energy and awareness.

Pursing his lips slightly, Hannibal stood from his seat and walked over to the left side of the bed where Will was closest to, he hadn't taken the man for one to sleep in the middle of the bed. The man reached out to pry a wrist from the man tangled in the sheets, the covers of the bed having been kicked to the end of the bed. His skin was smooth as Hannibal reached underneath Will's bare chest for an arm. He really didn't understand how the man could sleep in such a twisted position.

The bandages around Will's torso were soft against Hannibal's hands as he removed an arm and took ahold of the wrist in order to take the pulse. All was silent safe for the even breathing of Hannibal and the dissipating sound of Will's snores as Hannibal watched the small hand tick along the face of his watch. His heart rate was slightly accelerated, Hannibal mused, probably as a side effect of a nightmare.

It was interesting, the nightmares that Will described to him as they drove from his home back into Baltimore's city limits. There was a lot of water, telling more than his words that Will felt like he was slipping from the reality he lived in.

Hannibal was momentarily distracted by his thoughts and was actually taken by surprise by the hands that had reached out to wrap around his chest. Will sighed, still sleepy as he opened his eyes to meet Hannibal's.

"You look worried, is everything alright?"

"There is no need to worry, Will. Your vitals are within a normal range for your condition. I would advise you to take it easy for the day. I've already made you breakfast, it is sitting in the oven to keep warm."

"You didn't have to do that."

"Nonsense, my dear Will." Hannibal leaned in and placed a chaste kiss to Will's lips before gently wrapping his harms around the man and helping him to sit up against the headboard. "I only have two patients today. I've adopted fewer hours in light of your injury. So I will be home for lunch."

A feeling of warmth akin to affection waved over Hannibal's skin as he spoke. He imagined coming home to find Will in his bed every day or making the trip to Wolf Trap in order to spend the weekend with him, a true relationship. The term shocked the older man, he had never envisioned himself yearning for such a thing. Mentally pushing the worrying thoughts of attachment away, Hannibal looked at the curiously contorted face Will was donning. He recognized some of the emotion on the empath's face as pain.

"Has Jack assigned someone to watch over the office yet?"

"Yes, they have already contacted me to inform me they are keeping watch on the premises."

Will's stubble had thickened over the course of his hospital stay, Hannibal noticed as the tired man ran his fingers through it to scratch at his jaw. Will caught the look and a blush heated his cheeks.

"I'll shave if it bothers you."

Hannibal spared him a small smile as he readied the man's medication on the bedside table. There were two painkillers, a muscle relaxer, and of course an antibiotic. He handed them to Will, who glared weakly at the offending pills before taking them and the glass of cool water Hannibal offered him. His adam's apple bobbed as he swallowed the pills, catching Hannibal's eye.

"I trust you will be careful while I am away. The stairs are an unfortunate hassle but I think it would do you good to sit out in the garden for a while. And no, you don't have to shave. I'd just rather you trim it to its normal state. Do not take offense, but you look like a hermit, Will."

"Technically I am."

"Hermits do not indulge in relationships."

"A very special hermit then."

Will chuckled and tossed Hannibal a wolfish grin as he pushed slowly away from the headboard and let his legs dangle over the edge of the bed, his arms bracing him. He looked up at Hannibal with a warning lilt, Will wanted to try and get up by himself. He had to get used to doing everyday things again. Whether or not Hannibal felt it was too soon for him to push himself up by himself, the older man didn't give it away. His expression was neutral, watching. With an intake of breath, Will shoved himself from the bed and stood on shaky legs, they had been that way since his bed rest had been so severe.

He swayed for a few seconds before grinning cheekily up at Hannibal, who returned the look with a small smile of his own.

"I think I can manage to take care of myself while you're gone. I want to take a shower, but it might be too hard to bandage myself afterwards."

"I'll assist you with that before lunch this afternoon."

Images of them together in the steamy tiled shower filled Will's mind, a flush creeping from his chest to his neck and face. Suddenly it was hard to catch his breath, Will realized as his thoughts turned to the two of them going at it against the wall of the shower. Will felt arousal reverberate through his body, the front of his boxer shorts twitching as it did so.

"I'll be home soon enough, Will."

Hannibal comforted, though the faint teasing in his tone gave away his amusement at the situation. A light kiss Will's neck caused his arousal to flare, his eyes fluttering shut and the heat in the room spiked. When he opened his eyes, Will was alone in the room with a linger

scent of Hannibal's perfume the only evidence that the man had been there. A small echo of a closing door told Will that he was alone in the house.

The man sighed, he felt odd being in Hannibal's house alone. He had never been too comfortable being left in people's homes, or staying in them for that matter. A home was a safe place, and this was Hannibal's safe place. It was too baroque to relax Will, all of the paintings and artifacts stirring in him the feelings of empathy as he gazed at them. He turned away from the collection of them facing the opposite wall of the bed and looked for his clothes.

They weren't where he had placed them the night before, on one of the chairs over by the door. Instead there was a note on the sliding doors that led into the walk in closet. It said that all of his clothes had been pressed and hung up, his boots polished and his belt replaced. Will fingered the note before leaving it there and walking into the closet.

The room was well furnished and plush, the carpet soft under his feet. It seemed to be the storage room for Hannibal's older suits and lesser worn clothes. Will slowly made his way over to the single chair that rested by the shelves stacked neatly with shoes only to be distracted by a rich blue fabric hanging between two pairs of khakis that looked suspiciously like jeans. With a huff at turning around, Will reached out and ran his hand along the fabric. A lazy smile took over Will's sore face as the telltale texture of jeans caressed his fingers.

He tried to imagine Hannibal dressed in the pants but shook his head at the not quite right image of it. He chuckled a bit as he made his way over to the chair once again and was thankful to find a pair of sweatpants and a cleaner t shirt waiting for him. He checked the label of the sweatpants, no doubt from some high end chain because he sure as hell didn't own any.

.:V:.

"Will?"

Will's eyes opened at the sound of his name being called only for him to snap them shut at the offending sunlight blinding him. He could hear footsteps approaching form behind him. He turned his head to peer around the back of the lounge chair he was leaning back in to catch a bit of sleep. There was a slim figure standing beside the screen door that lead into the dining room, too slim to be Hannibal Will mused with a tired frown. It was when the rays of pale sunlight shone bright on a dark head of brunette hair did Will realize who it was.

"Hey Will, how are you feeling?"

"I'm fine, Alana, honestly."

Will turned back to face the expanse of the yard, wishing he was strong enough to sit under the shade of the small gathering of trees on the other side of the yard. He knew that he wouldn't be able to get back up without causing damage to the sutures sown into his skin. He closed his eyes in a long blink as he listened to Alana's soft footfalls, the click of her heels bringing the image of the stag up in his mind's eye. The creature crooned at him as he

watched it behind his eyelids, causing a warm feeling to cascade over him that had nothing to do with the sun.

“Hannibal wanted me to check on you, he’s been called in by a colleague for a consultation with one of their own patients. He was rather upset at not being able to be on time for lunch. But I think he just misses you.”

“Mm, Alana?”

The woman sat down in the chair to Will’s left, facing him. Her seat was on another side of the square wooden table that occupied the deck. She placed her hands atop the warm wood as she watched Will’s face for any pain. She made a small sound to indicate that she had heard him and was waiting for what he wanted to say. His eyes fluttered open and he locked his gaze with her own. She felt her breath catch in her throat as she noticed how stormy blue his eyes were, how gorgeous they were. Her heart fluttered before she remembered she had given him up. Besides, she had never seen Will more content than when he was around Hannibal.

“Hannibal is very skilled in everything he does,” Will paused, trying to figure out how to word his question. “But has he ever seemed…suspicious to you in anyway?”

“Suspicious as in?”

“Like he’s too well put together, like he has something to hide.”

“Will, he’s a retired surgeon and doctor. He’s just trying to live as he always aspired to be, his family has always had money but he wanted to make his own. There’s nothing suspicious about Hannibal living the way that he wants to.”

Will brought his hand gingerly to his face and rubbed at his eyes. His head was starting to pound with the racing thoughts occupying his mind. He couldn’t help but connect the image of the stag with Hannibal, but he wasn’t sure that was either a positive or negative thing. The stag often turned violent towards him or showed a tendency to be violent whenever he saw it, affiliating Hannibal with it didn’t sit right with the empath.

“Will, is everything alright between you two?”

“What? Oh, yeah. He’s been really accommodating.”

“That’s not what I meant and you know it.” Alana’s eyes hardened in warning. Will seemed as if he was sleeping, though his eyes were open and he was acting as normal as any other moment. “Is everything alright in the relationship? He isn’t asserting his dominance in an obscure way that has you thinking like this, is he?”

“It had nothing to do with his dominance, Alana. It’s a problem on my end. I have these,” He rubbed at his eyes again until little sparks of light began to ignite behind his lids. “Nightmares, daydreams, hallucinations, whatever you want to call them about a stag. The stag tends to display violence towards me whenever I see it.”

“And you’re beginning to affiliate Hannibal with this stag?”

Will knew she had tried her best to keep the incredulous tone out of her voice, but he still caught the undertone of it in her words. She was concerned about him with the way he was speaking, that much was obvious. She probably thought he was high on his pain medication and was spouting nonsense. But she would be one of the first people to know that he didn't get high off of pain medication due to the tolerance he's built up paired with the legitimate pain he took the medication for.

Will nodded as he contemplating telling her about the sudden jolt of warmth he felt in the pit of his stomach each time Hannibal touched him and how he had started to experience the same thing when faced with the stag. He thought better of it, knowing full well that the concerned woman was going to tell Hannibal everything they were discussing right now, even if he asked her not to. There was an underlying trace of fear in her eyes when Will finally removed his hand from his face and glanced at her.

"Perhaps the stag resembles something from your past that is beginning to resurface in your subconscious. You've gone through a major shift in your relationship with Hannibal and maybe there is an event of trauma linked to the type of shift you've made in the past that you've suppressed."

"I-yeah. Maybe your right."

Will nodded jerkily, his head now throbbing as he realized the stag and Hannibal shared the same eyes, the same penchant for showing off, the same knowing stare. He tried to direct his thoughts away from the dark places they were going only to jump when he felt Alana's small hand on his forehead, slightly tangling in the curls that made up his fringe.

A feeling of dread settled in Will as he realized that Hannibal hadn't been answering his phone the date that the young man from the most recent Ripper murder had gone missing. The man's unwillingness to answer the phone and the mused up manner in which the victim's hair had been paired with the fondness Hannibal held for Will's hair all clicked into place like puzzle pieces.

Will gasped as he recalled feeling the soft fingers of Hannibal treading through his hair various times throughout his week-long stay at the hospital. The memories were faint, as if he had been in a state of semi-consciousness when they occurred. The man had readily answered Will's question about how he felt about the empath's hair, though he had never expressed the fondness he held while Will was awake.

"Will? Alana, is everything alright?"

Hannibal's smooth, accented voice sounded worried as it approached them, his footfalls soft on the hardwood of the deck flooring. Alana removed her hand from Will's forehead and moved to intercept the older man before he could approach where Will was sitting. He listened to them talk in hushed tones, too preoccupied with his raging thoughts and the throbbing that had consumed his head.

Was he right in thinking that Hannibal had murdered that teenager? All he had was the similarities between the Ripper's fascination with the victim's hair and Hannibal's fascination with his own. The more disconcerting evidence was a link between Hannibal and a creature

Will's subconscious created to plague his nightmares. Will moved to get up, intent on getting back into the house and some aspirin to relive the throbbing in his head.

He must've moved too fast because he felt a jolt of pain across his left side and he shouted out his discomfort. His left hand curved around himself as he braced his other hand on the arm of the chair, leaning over to help alleviate some of the pain. Suddenly there were two shadows over him, Hannibal and Alana having rushed to his side at his shout.

All thoughts of the stag and the Ripper were torn from his head as he felt where the sutures were holding his stab wound closed through his thin shirt. His hand warmed as blood seeped through the bandages and his shirt. His breathing started to quicken as did the level of pain.

"You may have just tugged at the sutures a little too roughly," Hannibal comforted the man as he placed a hand on his hip and pulled the fabric of his shirt up to feel the wound through the bandages himself. Will's hand latched onto Hannibal's wrist as his other hand on the arm of the chair began to shake with tiny tremors.

"Alana, I must apologize for postponing lunch. But Will needs to have the wound washed thoroughly before having new bandages applied."

"No, no, not at all. I should get back to the office anyway." Alana followed behind Hannibal as he guided an inching Will towards the door into the dining room. "I'll call this evening after I visit your house to feed the dogs."

Will nodded his head in affirmation, too intent on clenching his jaw against the pain that was washing over him. He tried to toss her a smile over his shoulder but it came out more of a grimace than anything. She gave one of the worried smiles he was coming to associate with her before moving forward to hold the door open for Hannibal.

.:V:.

Hannibal was silent as he helped to guide Will carefully up the stairs and towards the guest bathroom. He hadn't been too keen on staying late lest Will get ahead of himself and cause himself harm. The man severely underestimated the value of his health which was only made more apparent in his harsh actions following the concerning words Alana had shared with him the moment he had arrived home. She had expressed her concern regarding his dark words, hoping it was just the result of the medications and the slight infection that may have developed.

He had assured her that while Will's word had been dark, they were no different than the rounds he made during their conversations concerning cases. Though it had been a little different considering Hannibal was the subject of suspicion rather than a nondescript person with which they were not acquainted with. The characteristics of a person normally spurred on the identification of the culprit, not the other way around.

"I'm sorry."

Will's soft spoken words echoed slightly throughout the tiled bathroom. The empath was seated on the closed lid of the toilet, hand still curved protectively around himself. He was

looking down at his bare feet, the man having forgone socks and shoes in favor of feeling the grass beneath them. Hannibal moved from where he was removing his jacket and rolling up the sleeves of his dress shirt.

“It is quite alright, Will. I know you have a very specific way of thinking through the cases that are presented to you.”

Hannibal moved to turn the faucet for the bathtub, only for Will to scoff.

“It’s not alright. I practically accused you of being the Chesapeake Ripper in my mind, Hannibal. I actually thought you had committed murder. Just because you resemble a fucking stag that only I can see and the fact that you like my hair.”

“Will, you have nothing to apologize for. You are so intelligent,” Hannibal stood and walked over to stand in front of Will. He leaned down to get on the sulking man’s level and reached out to grasp Will’s slightly shaking hands in his own. “That your mind works in the most obscure ways.”

Will was about to protest but Hannibal had leaned forward to press their mouths together in a strong kiss. Will’s lips were chapped from being outside and Hannibal ran his tongue over the skin to help relieve it. A groan sounded in Will’s throat at the action as his sweatpants began to tighten. He was just about to open his mouth to taste Hannibal’s lips when the older man broke the kiss.

“Patience, Will. You should be fit enough in a week’s time for the activities you are so eager to participate in.”

Will sighed as he watched Hannibal draw a warm bath for him, the perfectly rolled up sleeves never once getting a drop of water on them as the older man helped Will to disrobe and get comfortable in the tub. They shared a few kisses throughout the course of the bath, Hannibal’s hands teasing Will every so often as he caressed a spot longer than was necessary to clean it.

Chapter 9

Chapter Summary

Will's recovery is put on hold in favor was watching over someone else's.

Chapter Notes

gently places down in front of readers

i didn't mean for him to get hurt, but it just sorta happened. i'm so sorry!

runs off

See the end of the chapter for more notes

A heavy silence permeated the air as a lone figure sat in a sleek car, one of the few left in the parking lot. The inhabitant seemed to be waiting for something or perhaps someone. Their movements were slight, so as to not attract attention. Sudden action from the sliding doors of the rather ordinary establishment front prompted the smallest fraction of a head turn from the figure. Two men were talking loudly as they exited the building, a paper bag cradled in each of the men’s arms.

The inhabitant of the car watched as the two men crossed the mostly abandoned parking lot to the car furthest away from the establishment. It was a decent car, though when the inhabitant of the car had been tacking the note to the steering wheel it had smelled as if it was molding, most likely the result of a leak from the most recent rain through the upholstery of the ceiling of the vehicle. The presence of the note wasn’t registered until both men had relieved themselves of their bags in the back seat and had settled into the front of the car.

The driver, the thinner of the two men had frozen in his seat. The note was rather straight forward, thought the watching man, he hadn’t been rude nor condescending in his writing. The larger of the two figures roughly took ahold of the note, ripping it from the steering wheel where it was secured with a piece of tape. He appeared to be shouting, though no sound transmitted through the windows and towards the watching man.

Seeing that his task was completed, the watching man quietly shifted in his seat to buckle his seat belt. The keys turned in the ignition to spur a quiet rumbling of the car’s engine, though the sound went unnoticed by the two men who were now arguing in their own vehicle.

The note that the observing man had left for the two men was thrown out of a lowered window, the eloquently written words crumpled along with the paper. The beautifully scripted words ‘You should attempt to be more careful in your next endeavors’ faced the dark, starry night of that had fallen over the outskirts of the Baltimore city limits.

.:V:.

Will yawned with abandon as he pushed himself from the plush confines of his bed. He had slept peacefully enough, though the sutures keeping his newly scabbed over wound were beginning to itch. He had woken up hissing on a few occasions as his sleep fogged brain urged him to scratch at them in an attempt to relieve the itch, though it hadn’t exactly helped any. The man glanced at his fingers, spying bits of dried blood beneath his nails proved to him that the pain he experienced during the night hadn't all been a nightmare.

A glance at the bed over his shoulder as he made his way to the adjacent bathroom told Will that Hannibal was sitting up against the headboard just had the man had been when Will had fallen asleep. Reading, though Hannibal appeared to be a little sleep mussed. His hair was fluffy from the friction of shifting during his sleep, small wrinkles had formed in the man’s silk pajamas, and his facial features looked a fraction more rugged than they did after the man’s morning routine.

“I’m gonna shower.” Will informed the occupied man through another yawn, his hand doing its best to cover his mouth. Hannibal spared Will a glance to make sure the tired man didn’t run into the archway walls that led into the expansive bathroom. It was rather dark in the room, the thick curtains drawn over the windows to keep out the rising sun's rays. When Will was out of sight, Hannibal returned his gaze to the book he had in his hands. It was a rather stimulating read on the fundamentals of Old World cultures. The stag Will kept hallucinating paired with the leaps his mind kept making but the man wouldn’t accept had spurred Hannibal to research the significance of the symbols associated with the animal.

So far he had come across an old Algonquian legend that stated a person who partook in the act of cannibalism would transform into a stag like creature that walked on both two and four legs. It had antlers and was said to croon at people as a warning when approached. Hannibal let a small, impressed smile take over his lips as he closed the book and placed it atop the bedside table to his left.

Will really was a remarkable person, he may have skimmed over the legend himself as he studied throughout college. His mind harvesting the information deep within the bowels of his memory, only for it to resurface after the man had begun to interact with Hannibal. Impressive in its own right, yet concerning in another. Will was bound to make the connection should he delve into the symbols that his stag could possibly represent. Though just how much Will would make of it, the good doctor didn’t know.

That simply would not do, Hannibal thought as he too pushed himself from the plush bed. He slowly unbuttoned the white sleeping shirt he was wearing as he recalled Will saying that the stag had his eyes. The same guarded appearance that hinted at more complex emotions and thoughts. Will had been rather…embarrassed to mention the jolt of warmth he experienced in his middle Hannibal typically caused whenever Will would chance eye contact and that he

had begun to experience the same sensation when he happened across the stag in his nightmares or hallucinations.

Hannibal could only assume that Will's subconscious was trying to convey to his conscious what was right in front of him but it refused to accept. An anomaly itself. Will's mind was working to show him something he already knew, to an extent.

The sound of running water was faint as it wafted into the room along with the light cloud of steam. Hannibal would never understand how the man could sleep in such twisted positions nor how he could stand scalding hot showers. Hannibal slowed his thoughts down, wanting to enjoy the time he had with his dearest Will before the gifted man truly made the connection and had actual evidence that wouldn't be easy to write off as his overactive imagination.

Though should he get too close and Hannibal wasn't ready to give the man up, he would simply have to find a way to keep Will within his easy grasp. With a huff, the good doctor removed his pajama bottoms and made his way into the bathroom.

Will gasped as two arms wrapped around his hips, being mindful of the healing wound on the man's stomach. Will turned so that the spray of the water cascaded down his back, the heat of it helping to relax his tense muscles. Hannibal smirked at the light glare Will was aiming at him, he leaned in and kissed the frown right off of Will's lips. Hannibal held back the quiet hiss that wanted to sound in his throat as the hot water soaked through his hair and began to cascade down his own body.

Releasing his careful hold on the man before him, Hannibal reached around and moved the tap for the shower just a few notches down in order to cool the water. The steam didn't dissipate, though the temperature of the water was marginally more comfortable. Will's skin was flushed from his time spent in the shower before Hannibal had joined him. His shoulders and feet showed the most abuse, Hannibal mused as he pulled away from the kiss and gingerly began to inspect the wound Will had sustained two weeks ago.

"It's starting to itch."

"I recall you shouting out a few times during the night, you scratched at it I assume?"

Will nodded his answer, the words he had wanted to speak sticking in his throat as Hannibal's hands began to roam to other parts of his body. A brush over his growing arousal caused his breath to hitch. The smirk decorating Hannibal's lips paired with the man's own growing arousal gave away the pleasure he was taking in teasing Will's sensitive skin. Strong fingers found their way around Will's member and the man moaned his approval at the shift in attention.

"You really must try harder to ignore the itching. You don't want to go back to wearing bandages, do you?"

"N-no, I don't." Will's voice was deliciously ignited by the pleasure Hannibal's slow fingers were giving him. Will leaned back as if to rest against the tiled wall of the shower, but Hannibal shifted them so that Will was pressed chest first into the glazed glass that made up the door of the shower and that Hannibal's back was exposed to the cascade of warm water.

Will groaned as Hannibal took a more firm hold on his member and spread his legs apart with one of his own feet.

The click of a bottle being opened was the only warning Will received before he felt Hannibal's fingers enter him. A deep moan fell from Will's lips as he scrambled to get a hold on something, his arms stretching up to rest on the top of the door he was pushed against. He had been denied time after time when he had attempted to persuade Hannibal that he was ready for more than just kissing within the last week. But even those had been up for revoking, Hannibal reminded him every time he made a disgusted face at the antibiotics he still had to take.

Hannibal felt himself harden even more as he curled his fingers inside Will, the man arching his back in pleasure as his muscles clamped around the digits. The ridges of his vertebrae were prominent because of the action and if Hannibal had a free hand he wouldn't run a finger down the line of them. He settled for his mouth and began to plant sucking kisses all along Will's back. The combined actions of Hannibal's sucking mouth, his pumping fingers, and his probing fingers was too much for Will, the empath was panting as the steam rolled around him.

His skin was sensitive from not being indulged with attention for such a long time, the hot water he had run at first only made manners worse. Will pushed himself back on Hannibal's fingers, the sensation being more arousing than the man's pumping hand.

Hannibal complied as he removed his mouth from Will's skin and moved the tips of his fingers to rub at just the right spot. Will let out a strangled gasp as he came into Hannibal's hand. The younger man panted as Hannibal pumped him through his orgasm, though he did remove his fingers from Will's backside.

"Oh, ooh god, *Hannibal."*

Will's voice was loud, the man not caring if he sounded desperate. In all honesty he had been, his nightmares had been absent only for him to have fantasies of him and Hannibal, though he hadn't told the older man that. He clutched tightly at the top of the door, his knuckles turning white from the pressure. His arms flexed as did his stomach, enticing Hannibal even more.

Hannibal chuckled darkly as he reached over for the shampoo after cleaning his hand in the rain of water coming from the head of the shower and began to work up a foam in Will's curly locks. The empath was still clutching onto the top of the door, the slim boarder of metal shiny with the water and steam.

"Is that what you wanted, Will?" Hannibal's fingers were massaging the shampoo into Will's scalp, lulling the empath into a calm state. When Will finally seemed to recover from his intense orgasm, he straightened up, his hands releasing the desperate hold they had taken over the edge of the door. But Hannibal was far from done, he pressed his arousal up against Will's backside, his heated, slick skin shocking a groan from a still sensitive Will.

Will's hands shot out to grasp at the top of the door again as he leaned into the door, his backside pressing back against Hannibal as he began to harden a second time. Hannibal

detached the head of the shower from its spot high on the wall behind him and maneuvered it so that the water rained down over Will's head, washing the shampoo from his hair. Will gasped as he let the water wash over him, falling to run over his face and collect his stubble. Droplets fell from his chin, running down his body to wash away the evidence of his orgasm.

Once all of the foam was rushing down the drain alongside a tide of water between Hannibal's feet did the man return the head of the shower back in its typical spot. Will shook his head like a dog to alleviate some of the water from his hair, causing Hannibal to twitch against his backside. A deep groan sounded in the older man's throat as Will pushed himself back against Hannibal again, tempting the man as his own arousal twitched for attention.

Hannibal growled as he gripped Will's shoulders and pulled the slightly smaller man to him, grinding against the line of his backside. His strong hands roamed the expanse of Will's back, marveling at the moderate muscles that were usually hidden away under a plaid shirt. Will groaned his appreciation as Hannibal removed his hands and reached for the bottle of lube that had been hidden behind the typical shower soaps.

In a matter of seconds, Hannibal was entering Will, slowly inserting himself into the younger man. Once he was sheathed completely by Will, Hannibal curled his hands around the man's hips and began to thrust into him, setting a steady, rough pace. Will couldn't seem to catch his breath as he panted between every moan that fell from his lips. The empath was trying his best to grip the top of the door he was being pressed against by the momentum of Hannibal's movements.

.:V:.

An officer sat leaned against the hood of his car and he cradled a cheap gas station coffee in his hands. It was a little too warm in the noon hour for hot coffee, but the officer didn't really care. He was tired from keeping watch on the property around Will's house all night. He needed the caffeine to keep himself awake but he refused to purchase a sugary soda to aid him. He had just lifted the cup to his lips when a loud, pained yelp flew to the air, followed by a barrage of barking and growling.

The coffee found itself on the ground as the officer pushed himself from the hood of his car and pulled his gun out of the holster on his hip. He was informed that there had been a previous attempt of breaking in and that he needed to keep an eye out for another. He had also been informed that the dogs wouldn't be too loud lest something serious was happening. The officer felt his heart beat loud in his ears as a the figure of the two biggest dogs rounded the side of the house, chasing a tall figure.

The man running from the dogs skidded to a stop as he saw the officer pointing a firearm at him. He dashed to the front of the house and disappeared in the dense trees along the other side of the house. The officer gave chase, following the wake of the angry dogs. A smaller dog had rounded the corner of the house behind him and ran alongside him, an alpha keeping an eye on him, the officer assumed. They ran into the cluster of trees, searching them for a good twenty minutes only to be met by scurrying animals.

The two big dogs were winding their ways through the trees towards the officer, no longer growling but keeping sharp eyes on the trees around them.

“Did they get away?”

The officer knew perfectly well that the dogs couldn’t respond. He had been taken a little aback by all three of the ones that had given chase along with him sat in a straight line in front of him, lowered their heads, and whined.

“It’s alright, we’ll get him next time.”

The dogs perked up at the proud tone the officer had spoken in. The smallest of the dogs yipped and led the way back through the trees and towards the house. The officer was about to use the key he had been given to enter the house from the front when he was barked at by the same small dog. The dog stared at him before trotting off around the house towards the back. It was obvious the dog wanted to show him something, so the officer followed the lead.

The back door was still swinging on its hinges from being thrown open and there was a lump of fur that could only be the other large dog lying still on the top of the small set of steps leading into the back of the house. Curses fell from the officer’s lips as he spied a puddle of blood under the dog, mating the dog’s fur. Reaching for the phone fastened to his belt, the officer dialed Jack’s number as he climbed the steps and rounded the dog, which was still breathing as he glanced at it, though it was unconscious.

“What is it?”

“We’ve had another break in attempt. This time they managed to open the back door but the dogs attacked and gave chase. One of them got injured and there’s another note on the door.”

“Did you search the perimeter?”

“Yes, Agent Crawford. There was no sign of the man nor the means of transport he had to use to get out here. I’m searching the house as we speak and there isn’t anything missing or any other signs of damage.”

“Alright. I’ll be down there in an hour. Call the local animal hospital and get them down there as soon as possible. Tell them we’ll cover any and all fees for them to make a house call.”

“Yes, sir.”

.:V:.

“What?”

The eating utensils that had been in Will’s hands clattered loudly onto the plate he had been eating off of. On the opposite side of the table, Hannibal flinched minutely at the harsh sound. He worried a second for the glass plate but his attention focused on Will as the man began to stand from his seat, a frenzied expression taking over his features.

“We’ll get there around the same time as you. Make sure that officer of yours knows not to move him. I don’t want to lose one of my dogs, Jack.”

That certainly piqued Hannibal's interest. Had there been another attempted break in at Will's house? Everything had been fine when he had driven out there the previous night to care for the dogs. Perhaps it had occurred just a few moments ago as they sat down to lunch. Hannibal inwardly huffed, he hadn't taken but a few bites of the meal he had made. But he knew he would have to store it away for later. Will slumped back into his seat opposite of Hannibal, cradling his head in his right hand and he rested his elbows atop the table.

"Another intruder?"

"Yeah," Will sighed, moving his plate away from him with his left hand. If Will hadn't just received a no doubt concerning call from Jack, Hannibal would've sneered at such a rude act. "Franklin's bother, Marvin, was chased from the back of my house my the more alpha of my dogs. But from the description, I think Winston got injured. He's the most recent rescue and he's taken a liking to me."

"Ah," Hannibal lowered his own utensils to lay across his plate. "And you've taken a liking to him as well."

"I know I shouldn't have a favorite, but he's grown on me. He doesn't care that I walk around the house a lot, he'll follow my every move. He's the only one that follows me to keep an eye on me when I sleep walk."

"No need to apologize. You are allowed to like one of them more than the others, just as long as you treat them all equally."

Hannibal stood from his seat and picked up both his and Will's rather full plates. They were supposed to be enjoying a rich lamb curry along with some saffron rice and a pine nut salad, but Will didn't seem to be hungry anymore. He was too shocked by the news he had been given to stomach food, let alone such rich food. Hannibal frowned as he walked into the kitchen and began to place the remains of their meal in respective tupperware containers. Will had requested curry a few days ago but Hannibal had postponed the man's request in light of Will losing the contents of his stomach over a simple shepard's pie.

Hannibal stacked the containers neatly in the fridge and readied a thermos of the juice he had made for their meal, it had the vitamins Will didn't know he had been taking with his midday meal for the duration of his stay at Hannibal's, and the good doctor didn't want the man to miss a dose. It was the only aid that Hannibal saw as necessary to fight the waft of infection the older man had caught coming from Will the first night they had shared a bed together.

"I will drive, Will." Hannibal called as he heard the distinct sound of keys in the foyer. A pause took to the air as Will pulled contemplated taking his jacket. It was still too warm and humid to don such an item of clothing, so he forwent it. Opting to go as he was which was in a simple faded red button up and a pair of khaki slacks. His boots were scuffed but had tried his best to shine them during one of Hannibal's absences. The brown leather gleamed back at him, looking better than they had the day he had bought them so long ago.

Hannibal entered the foyer, his black blazer buttoned up over a pastel purple dress shirt. He had gone casual today, forgoing a waist coat. His sleek shoes clicked dully on the hardwood flooring scattered about his house, catching Will's attention as the man had been spacing out.

A hand on his shoulder prompted him to look up, he locked eyes with the older man. His worry wasn't as apparent as Will's, though the empath could see it in the small smile the man was giving him. Will broke the eye contact as he reached out for the offered thermos.

.:V:.

Before Hannibal even had the chance to turn the car off and take the keys out of the ignition, Will was opening his door and stepping out of the vehicle. His steps were controlled even though the man had the urge to race into the house. He was intercepted by Jack, who had been standing in front of the undercover car the officer stationed there had been leaning on earlier that day.

"Everything is under control with your dog, Will. But the note that was left on your back door is more concerning."

"More concerning for you, I don't care about the note right now. I need to see if it was Winston that got attacked."

"I wouldn't know that. You've got so many dogs I can't even tell them apart. But I did make sure that the vet got out hear as quick as possible."

"I have seven of them, Jack. There are two large ones, a medium sized one, and three smaller ones. Winston is the only fluffy one."

"Will."

"I'm checking on my dogs before I look over a fucking note, Jack."

With that said, Will sidestepped Jack and walked past the annoyed man. The agent had been genuinely surprised and a little shocked at how many dogs had greeted him when he first entered Will's house. The previous times he had visited there were only a few of them in view, the other must have been off hiding or sleeping somewhere he couldn't see them.

"His dogs are like his children Jack, though I know you don't have any of your own it will help you to understand why he is so protective over them."

"Dr. Lecter." Jack greeted the man, as Hannibal approached him. "I understand his attachment to them, that's why I offered the local pet hospital triple their fees for their immediate attention. I don't have a doubt in my mind that Will would quit should he lose one of them. He's too valuable to lose."

"And you've contracted a bit of a soft spot for our dear Will."

"I have. I want him in the best health he can manage, I don't need him or want him to fall into a depression as a result of this incident," Jack quietly admitted. His frown deepened before he put back on the mask he wore when he was on scene. "On another note, the officer described to me the brother of your patient. The same as Will gave us and what we've gathered from the surveillance tapes from the attack. We've got a clear ID on him, his name is Marvin Froideveaux."

“I don’t recall Franklin ever mentioning he had a brother, but I trust in Will’s experience and your findings, Agent Crawford. May I see the note?”

Jack reached over to take the bagged note from the officer. It was rather crumpled for having been tacked to the door, but Hannibal didn’t pass any judgment.

“It appears that I have a problem as well, then. If they choose to act out their threats than I will need to increase the security around my own home, especially since Will has agreed to stay there for another week before returning here.”

“Make sure that you do, Doctor.” Jack ignored the racing thoughts of Will and Hannibal out of his head at the mention of the two of them living together. Jack wasn’t homophobic, having dealt with all walks of life, but there was just something that didn’t sit right with him at the mention of the two men’s relationship. Will wasn't just a teacher he had pulled from a classroom he was a part of his team now and he kept an eye out for people on his team. Instead he focused on the fact that Will felt the need to prolong his stay in someone’s company. “Is he recovering well? He seemed in a good enough shape to walk.”

“He is doing well. His sutures will be removed in a few days’ time and his wound is beginning to show signs of scabbing. He shouldn’t have too much of a scar.”

“He isn’t jumping at every sound?”

“As if he is paranoid of another attack? No, he seems to have accepted that he’s been attacked. He is more concerned for others than for himself, one of his more chivalrous yet alarming characteristics.”

Jack frowned at Hannibal’s words. The agent had gathered that much about Will from working with him, even before he had requested the empath come back to the field. A show of ignorance for the very note that threatened his life in favor of checking on his dogs, only proved as much from the man. Will tended to not care about his life as much as those around him did.

“It was Winston!” Will’s shout from the doorway leading into the front of the house caught both men’s attention. There was a dark glare on Will’s face that stirred in Hannibal the urge to truly smile, though it would not do him well to smile in such a situation. The man looked wonderful when he let his emotions take over him, no matter how dark or pleasurable they were. Hannibal excused himself to Jack and crossed the distance between the driveway and the porch.

“The vet said that he’ll be fine, but he needs to be watched. His back leg will be more sensitive to the weather once he heals.”

“It is alright, Will. Please calm down.”

Hannibal placed both hands on Will’s shoulders, forcing the man to stand chest to chest with him from an arm’s length away. Will had started to breath quickly, no doubt blaming himself for not having been there to save Winston. Will looked into Hannibal’s eyes for a few moments, allowing the doctor to gauge his emotions far more successfully than if he only had

to observe the man. Will was stressing out and it would do more damage than good. If he lost control of his emotions he would ruin the progress he had been making in his own recovery.

“We can move you back here earlier than expected, though I will join you. I would like to monitor your condition for another week as we agreed this morning.”

“You don’t have to do that, I can manage by myself.”

“Will, would you honestly continue to take your medication in light of worrying over Winston?”

Will brought a hand up to rub at the back of his neck, the telltale sign that he was exhausted, sore, and trying not to lie. Hannibal nodded his confirmation before leaning in and placing a chaste kiss on the younger man’s lips, well aware of the attention they were already attracting from the surrounding officers and Jack. A blush crept up Will’s face as he hadn’t been expecting such a forward action, though some of the tension did leave his body.

“Alright, but I don’t want to be held responsible for all the dog fur. I’ll vacuum and clean the house before we leave today.”

“Good idea.” Hannibal let his lips turn up in a small grin at Will’s mumbled words. He led the man back into the house to check on what they would need to do as they watched over the injured dogs recovery.

Chapter End Notes

This story will probably be around twenty chapters instead of my original goal of only ten. My imagination had kind of run away with this story and I find myself writing bits of it every day.

Thank you to all of the readers for not only reading my story, but for leaving comments and kudos (◠‿◠✿)

Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal are visited by a surprise guest.

Chapter Notes

throws to the readers

i had to do it this way, i'm apologizing beforehand

runs away before any more furniture can be thrown

“You’re such a good boy for protecting the house.”

Will spoke in a soft voice, he was seated on the edge of his bed watching Winston sleep up by the pillows. Will had insisted on staying behind while Hannibal made the drive back to Baltimore to pack up a few things of his own as well as Will’s. The empath was positive that Hannibal would run all of his clothes in the wash before bringing them, Hannibal had expressed on many occasions that the aftershave he wasn’t too fond of lingered on Will’s clothes even though Will had stopped using it months ago.

Will reached out to rub a hand over Winston’s front paws, the fur smooth beneath his fingers. His mind had gone blank when he first entered the house and saw that his dogs were all huddled together around a bandaged an unconscious Winston. A ringing had all been the most prominent sound over his suddenly muffled hearing. The vet had explained to him that Winston was first knocked on the head and then approached with a knife afterwards, inferring that Winston fought against the intruder despite the pain he had experienced.

Will glanced at the gun he was issued via Jack as it sat in its holster atop the bedside table. The man could tolerate an attack on himself, but he would be damned if someone messed with his dogs. This was their safe place, where they lived out a better life than they had before he had rescued them. He was getting increasingly angry that Franklin and his brother were beginning to treat his house like a memo board, working his dogs up even more with each passing visit.

A low whine diverted Will’s gaze back on to the bed. Winston appeared to be dreaming as he slept, his paws twitching as if he were running and his muzzle crinkling in muffled growls.

Will's lips curved into a fond smile as he watched the dog chase something in his sleep, no doubt reliving memories of early that afternoon.

Sighing, Will stood from the bed. He reached over to grab the holster and fastened it around his waist. The dogs that had joined him in the bedroom as he tidied up looked up at him expectantly. They weren't used to seeing Will pick up his gun without expecting him to depart for work. Will calmed the dogs with a low whistling sound, knowing that they weren't too fond of being alone in the wake of what had occurred.

The empath reached over to the laundry basket he had placed in the chair he had settled into a corner beside a couple of shelves of books. It was beside the door, just as the reading chairs were situated in his room at Hannibal's, though the comparison was laughable. Will only had the books he had purchased from his years spend at college and an old chair that had been here when he purchased the house, whereas Hannibal had a large selection of books that ranged from psychology to kinesiology and expensive leather chairs that looked as if they belonged in an interior design magazine.

The freshly laundered sheets were still warm to the touch as Will folded them carefully, he didn't want there to be any wrinkles in them when he and Hannibal would make the bed later that night after Winston's bed was moved from his favorite spot in the living room into the bedroom. Once the sheets and the quilt he used as a comforter were folded, Will placed them in a neat stack in the seat of the chair and put the empty basket back in its spot within the closet.

The smallest dog, who was unfortunate to have an under bite, followed Will as he made his way into the living room, pulling the vacuum out from a closet in the hallway along the way.

.:V:.

The sound of a car pulling up in the drive caught Will's attention, he was sitting on the porch with Winston curled up on one of the outside beds. The other dogs were either laying around the porch or out in the yard playing. Will lowered the glass of whiskey he had just brought up to his lips as he watched Hannibal get out of his sleek car. The slightly taller man looked just as he did when he had left, though there was a pinch around his eyes as he looked at Will. He nodded at the glass filled with two fingers of amber liquid cradled in Will's hand.

"I had hoped you sustained from treating yourself to a glass."

"Am I not allowed to drink with my medication?"

"I would rather you didn't."

Will felt his face heat up at that. He had completely forgotten that he was on medication, just as Hannibal suspected he would. Will thought back over the last couple of hours as he cleaned the house. He hadn't felt any more effected by the alcohol than he normally was, though his mind had been buzzing with racing thoughts of everything he'd experienced in the last couple of weeks, the whole Franklin thing had seemed rather more complicated than he cared to admit.

“Are you alright, Will?”

Hannibal’s voice was suddenly in front of him, Will focused his eyes to find the older man kneeling down to get a better look into his eyes, a hand braced on his knee. Will looked into Hannibal’s eyes, easily seeing the faint worry within the dark eyes. Shaking his head to bring him back to the present. Will offered a grimace of a smile to the older man, trying his best to answer the question in the affirmative.

“Perhaps it was a good choice on your part to stop cleaning when you did.”

A hand rested against Will’s forehead, feeling the rather warm skin for any signs of a fever. When he didn’t feel an alarming heat, there was a bit of warmth that couldn’t be the sole result of the alcohol Will had consumed, it was seem that his infection had flared as a result of the stress the man was feeling. Hannibal glanced at Winston, who was staring up at him and waving his fluffy tail. Will let out a bark of forced laughter as he noticed that Hannibal had left the car door open in favor of rushing to his side.

“Why don’t we get you inside? We can have the leftovers from our lunch before we tend to anything else that needs to be cleaned.”

“That sounds good, I’m pretty hungry.”

“A result of your heightened stress dissipating, to be sure,” Hannibal straightened to stand and watched as Will placed the glass of whiskey down on the window sill beside him before standing up himself. As he did so, the undone buttons on the top of Will’s shirt billowed out and allowed Hannibal a view of the marks he had made on Will’s skin earlier that day in the shower.

Hannibal spied the holster attached to Will’s belt, though he didn’t say anything to the man. The older man had expected as much, Will had been almost in a rage when they had gotten into the car, he sulked for the duration of the ride. Every so often the upset man would mumble under his breath, the only words audible had been rather vulgar. Hannibal was looking forward to seeing Will in action yet again, as morbid as that sounded. There was something enrapturing about seeing Will lose the control he desperately grasped at to steady himself.

With a mildly comforting smile, Hannibal watched as Will kneeled down to pick up Winston, the dog allowing him to do so without much restraint. The older man followed Will into the house and watched as he gently placed the dog onto his bed in the living room. As soon as Will had straightened up into a standing position, Hannibal moved in and roughly cupped the man’s face and connected their lips.

Will let out a small groan, though whether it was in pain or is pleasure even he couldn’t tell you. Hannibal’s lips were hard on his own, demanding the attention that they hadn’t been given in a couple hours’ time. Will complied to every movement, allowing Hannibal to worry his bottom lip before the man’s tongue was exploring his mouth. The traces of whisky Will had been sipping in the man’s absence blossomed to life as their tongues tangled with each other’s.

Will found himself tangling his hands in Hannibal's silky hair, not caring that he might get reprimanded yet again that the action was less than accepted.

In a flare of confidence, Will pushed his body flush against Hannibal's. Both been relished the feeling, though hands didn't stray from their spots.

Will was panting by the time Hannibal had released him, though his hands lingered along his jawline, feeling for any signs of swollen lymph nodes, though to Will it just felt like a loving caress. Will brought his eyes up to meet Hannibal's, curiosity swirling with the pleasure that had darkened his blue eyes.

"What was that for?"

"I was curious what would happen. I'm quite content with the results."

Hannibal smirked before disentangling himself from the marginally smaller man and proceeded out the front door and out to the car that he had purposefully left open.

.:V:.

"Knock knock."

Alana's voice called from the open front door. The dogs had been let out while Hannibal finished cooking their lunch and Will set the table. It was a rather relaxed meal of Hannibal's version of a roast. It had been simmering in the oven since early that morning when the two men had been awoken by the sounds of a passing storm. Will had literally jumped awake, putting a sleeping Hannibal on alert.

"Come on in." Will called from the dining room as he placed the bowl of roasted red potatoes, onions, and leeks on top of a trivet. The woman's heels could be heard as she advanced into the house, pausing only when she noticed a sad Winston gazing out the open door from his bed.

"He seems so depressed. Is he doing any better?"

Will tossed the woman a small smile as she entered the dining room.

"He's doing surprisingly well. He seems more upset about not being able to go about his business than the actual wound."

"Ah, good day Alana." Hannibal graciously greeted as he carried in the roast, still sizzling quietly in the pan it had been cooking in. He smiled dazzlingly at the woman before he placed the pan on top of another trivet Will had managed to dig out of the back of the cabinet. "Would you care to join us for our meal?"

"I would be delighted. Actually, *we* would be delighted. Abigail?"

The late teen entered the room with a wide smile on her pink lips, the dogs that had been outside following her every move. She giggled as they padded around her and licked at her hands. She was looking downward to avoid stepping on any of their paws and finally looked

up once she crossed the threshold into the room. Her eyes didn't seem to be swirling with the guilt and depression they normally were when Will was around her and he was glad to see the change, even if he could hint at the emotions in the back of her eyes. She stood beside a smiling Alana, looking almost as if she could be her daughter.

The two of them were dressed in similar clothing. Alana was donning yet another floral dress, though it was in contrast to the vibrant and rich tones she typically wore to lectures and meetings. The dress she was wearing today was an ocean blue with flowers scattered about the fabric in a darker shade of the blue that complimented the blue and black plaid shirt Will was wearing. A black cardigan was doing well to shield her skin from the hot sun. A shirt of the same color was on Abigail, the girl wearing a button up with a pair of dark jeans. The young teen smiled in greeting as the two men shared a pleasantly surprised look with each other.

"Oh, hello, Abigail." Will moved forward to share a light hug with the young girl, under the watchful eye of Alana.

"Hi, Will. Are you recovering alright? Alana told me what happened just a few days ago."

"He is doing fine, young Abigail. Despite his less than enthusiastic attitude towards his medication." Hannibal answered before Will could as he moved forward as well and shared his own hug with the young girl. He winked in a teasing manner at Abigail, both of them knowing Will well enough to know how he would retort to that.

"I wouldn't mind taking the pills if you didn't insist on waking me up at the crack of dawn when you get up." Abigail chuckled lightly at the empath's rather heated words.

"I apologize, Will. I only have your best interests in mind." Hannibal lightly touched Will's shoulder before rounding the table and shifting the dished on the table for more plates.

Abigail smiled as the two men bantered lightly, she could see a change in Will. He seemed more relaxed around Hannibal. Hannibal seemed more content and outspoken, his change catching the young girl by surprise. She looked over to Alana, the questioning lilt to her expression asking in silence. Alana smiled at the girl, nodding her head at the Hannibal who was putting the finishing touches on the roast and Will who had gone to fetch more plates.

A small knowing smile lifted the young girl's lips up at the corners as she took the seat Hannibal was offering her. Alana was next to sit as Will returned to the room with two more plates and sets of cutlery. The dogs retreated to the living room as both Hannibal and Will let out a low whistle in warning before they two sat down at the table, Hannibal having offered Will his seat as well.

.:V:.

"I really appreciate you bringing her, but I just worry what might come of it."

Alana turned a mildly curious expression to Will, they were both standing side by side in front of the sink. Will was washing the dishes and Alana was drying them in the second, bare basin of the sink and staking them off to the side on the counter to be put away later.

Hannibal and Abigail had taken the dogs out back. The young girl helping a subdued, yet excited Winston around the yard.

“You’re worried that Franklin and Marvin will target her next.” Alana watched the way Will met her serious gaze before turning it back to the suds in front of him. He nodded as a heavy sigh wracked his body. Alana gingerly took the pro-offered plate and dried it as she watched Hannibal through the window in front of them. He kept glancing at Abigail, as if he were worried and simply checking on her.

“Jack hasn’t found any signs of them lately and they could be hiding out in the woods back there for all I know.”

Will nodded to the tree line just a mile from the steps leading into this part of his little house. He placed the sponge he had been using back on its dish after wringing it dry and pulled the stopper in the sink out. The water gurgled as it swirled down the drain, bubbles lingering in the basin.

“She’s under surveillance no matter where she goes within the walls of the rehabilitation center, Will. She’ll be alright.”

“What about when she climbs over the walls?”

Alana stayed silent at that, the empath did have a valid point. She was about to make a rebuttal when a gun shot rang out over the field behind Will’s house and through the open window. The woman jumped in alarm only to find Will’s arms surrounding her as he pushed her from in front of the window. The glass shattered and went flying all around the sink. They both felt their breath leave their lungs as they collided hard with the ground.

Outside a scream echoed across the open field followed by the heavy sound of dogs giving chase floated through the shattered window. There was a shout Will thought sounded like Hannibal calling out to Abigail.

Far off barking and loud footsteps could be heard before the back door by the end of the counter swung open and Abigail came rushing in. Even in her haste, she had spared the thought to help Winston up the steps and into the house. The injured dog limped slowly over to where Will and Alana were untangling themselves from each other on the linoleum. There was a frenzied look about her features, the gun shot having startled her.

“Abigail, are you alright?” Alana quickly asked, taking the hand Will was offering to help pull her back to her feet. The woman tossed Will a thankful smile as she side stepped the shards of glass that littered the ground and moved towards Abigail. The young girl held tight to Alana’s arm in a sign of fear, not caring how casual the action was in light of the situation. The last time she had heard gunfire, she had nearly died. The girl nodded fervently, conveying that she was indeed alright. The panicked look held graver news.

Will kneeled down to check Winston for any more injuries and let out a sigh of relief as he found none. The dog just seemed shaken as his tail wagged half-heartedly as Will pressed a kiss to the lingering bruise on the top of his furry head.

“Hannibal told me to come inside, he went after them with the dogs. He told me that you need to call Agent Crawford right away. And the officer that’s stationed just outside of the perimeter. He thinks they were hiding out in the woods, waiting.”

Will tossed Alana a look before he ushered her and Abigail into the dining room. There were no windows in the room, so they were relatively safer than if they were anywhere else in the house. He reached for his cellphone on the small, skinny table that supported the land line phone and some mail. He hit the redial button as he gave of warning for them to stay in the room.

“Yes, Will?” The man sounded bored, just as he had earlier when Will had called to update the man on Winston’s medical bills being received. The agent had simple told Will to forward the bill to him with the afternoon post pick up and that he would take care of it. The man was probably expecting another trivial call.

“Jack, they were in the woods waiting for the moment to move. Alana brought Abigail over to visit and they waited until we were all separated. They opened fire on me and Alana through by kitchen window, we’re all fine. But Hannibal took the dogs and went after them.”

A slew of curses drifted over the line and Alana shared a worried look with Will. There was the sound of the man shuffling papers he had probably been sitting in front of into a pile off to the side of his desk.

“You better get a medic out here, Jack. Because I’m going after them and I won’t hesitate to fire. They’ve done enough damage to me and my dogs. I’m tired of this whole situation.”

Will ended the call and moved into the living room and retrieved his gun and holster from the mantle above the fire place. Winston let out a whine in his bed, all of the commotion winding him up. Will tossed the dog a forced smile and patted him across the back before removing another gun from the drawer of his desk.

"Everything is gonna be alright, cher, daddy's gonna get the bad guys." Will's accent helped to calm the frenzied dog just a bit. Winston wagged his tail a few times as he watched Will leave the room, armed with two guns. Will mentally cringed as he realized the two women waiting in the dining room overheard his accented words. He just couldn't help it, his control had slipped due to his increasing anger at the situation.

“Here, this is just in case they circle around and try to get into the house.” Will held the firearm out to Alana, the woman just looking at him in surprise. “Lock all of the doors behind me and don’t let anyone in. Jack will be here as soon as he can, the officer is calling for local backup and they’ll be here in a few minutes. They’re probably going to send someone in to watch over you, most likely a woman to help calm Abigail down since she’s already being treated for trauma, that’s what I would do anyway if I still worked law enforcement.”

Will spared a comfortable smile to the young girl before he placed the gun Alana wouldn’t take on the table beside her. She was aiming a pale glare at him, more upset at the situation than him in particular. That didn’t mean she agreed with his chosen plan of action. He always was one to sit back and wait for help to arrive, this was a completely new side of Will that she hadn’t yet encountered. She didn’t know whether it was a result of Hannibal being in the

man's life and expanding his world or if it was a result of being targeted and growing upset at the constant attacks to him and his life.

"Will, you can't be serious. Going after the people that are trying to kill you? You're not even fully recovered from your last encounter with them!"

"Alana, I have to. Hannibal can take care of himself but they're armed and he isn't. I can't risk anyone else getting hurt in this mess. Just be careful and wait here!"

With that said, Will nodded at each of them in turn before he took off into the other room. They could hear him remove the gun from its holster and then the safety click off before he exited the house. The door swung closed as Will's running footsteps could be heard crossing the field before disappearing as he entered the dense woods.

Alana and Abigail shared a concerned look as they heard Winston whine in the living room at the sound of approaching sirens.

Chapter 11

Chapter Summary

Conflict arises at the Will Graham house.

Chapter Notes

displays to the readers dramatically

i am personally not too fond of this chapter, but that's just because i was the one that wrote it

leaves you to enjoy the new chapter

See the end of the chapter for more notes

A slew of quiet curses steadily left his lips as Will treaded through the dense foliage surrounding his little house. He had been following a path of deep footprints that were suspiciously the same size as Hannibal's shoes. Will silently thanked the intelligent man for leaving behind a trail for him to follow, though it was a little disconcerting that the man knew Will well enough to know how he would run after him.

Too preoccupied by his thoughts, Will tripped over an overgrown root, the gun in his hands nearly flying out of his grasp as he tried to catch himself on a nearby tree. His palms scraped on the rough bark as his side protested at the odd angle his torso had twisted from his action. Will groaned out in pain as he kneeled down by the root that had tripped him. He dropped the gun to the ground in favor of circling his arms around his middle, pain blossomed there and in his right ankle. It felt as if someone had pulled the skin around the healing stab wound and as if trying to separate the skin from his muscles, Will panicked as he quickly yanked his shirt from the waist of his pants were it was secured by his belt.

Will's hands gently felt at his skin as he gazed down at his exposed middle. The gash that had been the knife wound was now a half peeling scab. Where the scab had been pulled off by his shirt at the sudden and rough movement of falling was bleeding, the drops of blood forming quickly on his skin and staining his white undershirt. A new bruise was beginning to form over the already blue and purple remains of the initial one. Sighing lightly, Will let his shirt fall back down to cover his body. He stayed there kneeled on the ground for a few moments while he gathered his bearings.

The chattering of the cicadas was subdued in the early afternoon heat, something that didn't sit with Will very well. It was too quiet within the trees. Will quickly retrieved his gun and turned to aim it to his right, a twig snapping in the distance. A flash of color that Will didn't remember Hannibal wearing prompted him to stand up and pull the trigger. A shout sounded in the air and the figure that had been coming towards him jumped out of the line of fire and was leaning heavily on a tree facing Will.

"Will, it's me!"

Hannibal's voice was harsh, the man was yelling for once. He had planned for the two brothers to find the firearm in his car, but not for them to be so enthusiastic as to actually shoot at him. True he had reacted in chasing after them, it was that action that provoked a second shot aimed at him, that one actually hitting him.

If Will was paranoid enough to fire at him and make a hit, Hannibal wouldn't take that lightly, he was already angry at the rash and idiotic actions that Franklin was taking. The obsessive man truly had no flare for the tastefully dramatic violence that Hannibal was used to upholding himself. Disappointment flared in the man every time Franklin and his brother acted out against Will, Hannibal couldn't help but think how much *better* he could do things.

Hannibal allowed those thoughts of anger and disappointment recede in to the back of his mind, he had more pressing matters to attend to at the moment. Like the fact that Will looked as if he was going to pass out, his skin was pasty and gleaming with sweat, a dark stain was spreading on the man's shirt, he was limping with every small step he mustered the energy to take, but more importantly he was aiming a loaded gun at Hannibal.

The older man let a small smile of comfort grace his gleaming features as he reveled in the sweet smell that was Will's natural scent. For man who spent a lot of time around animals and profusely sweated, Will tended to not exude that. Will moving forward towards him scattered Hannibal's thoughts again, as did the jolt of pain that went through his left arm. The worry on the younger man's face was evident as he spied the blood seeping through the left sleeve of Hannibal's gray dress shirt.

"Oh god, Hannibal."

Hannibal looked up at Will, his slouching against the tree causing him to appear shorter than the younger man. He spared another small smile as Will placed his gun in the holster and reached out only to hover his hands over Hannibal's body, not quite sure where he should touch or not. Despite his best efforts, Hannibal had been careless and hasty in his anger, causing the limbs and branches of the trees he had been weaving though to graze his skin in light cuts as he ran. The small tears that were scattered over his shirt and trousers said that much. Marvin had been the one to fire both times, opting to take refuge in the canopy of trees while Franklin had been the bait on the ground level.

"I will admit to my carelessness. I was expecting them to be much slower than they were, but when one is up in the trees they have the advantage."

At Hannibal's words, Will's hands flew to his gun. The empath's thoughts racing with worry for Hannibal, Alana, Abigail, and his dogs. With the fear that he'd be deemed to bed rest for

another additional week because of his ankle and his newly agitated stab wound, that Hannibal would deem him too troubling and move on back to his own life to leave Will alone again…

"Where are my dogs?" Hannibal didn't miss the way Will had said *my* instead of *the* when speaking about the dogs. Over the course of Hannibal's temporary stay it had always been 'please take the dogs out' or 'the dogs need more water'. But the use of the word *my* was spurred on by Will's need to prove something. Hannibal had no doubt that the next time Will came face to face with the brothers, only one person would be able to walk away from the conflict, the anger flaring in the empath's eyes was proof enough.

"It is alright, Will," Hannibal shook his head at the action. "They should be back at the house by now. I commanded them to return in order to avoid any of them getting injured. Franklin and Marvin have already harmed one of your dogs and I didn't want another one to meet the same fate. As for Franklin and Marvin, I managed to keep up with them as they ran. On the other side of this wood they had a car waiting, though I would speculate that they've been hiding out among the trees."

Will reached out and helped Hannibal to stand, it appeared that the older man had had a run in with one of the more unforgiving trees. His right pant leg was torn and Will glimpsed at a deep cut dirtied with dried blood and dirt. Will moved one of his hands to grasp lightly at Hannibal's face, bringing the man to face him head on. They shared a heated kiss, adrenaline still pumping through both of their systems.

"For an intelligent man, you act so recklessly sometimes, Hannibal." Will chided lightly as he helped to support the man against his better, right side. His body ached in retaliation of the added pressure Hannibal's leaning body provided, the old bruises on his ribs blossoming anew with the more recent ones. Will hissed through clenched teeth as he felt his ankle throb after the few, tentative steps they had taken together.

"You running after me wasn't such a smart idea either, my dear Will." Hannibal's voice was soft, though the chiding tone he used was more pronounced than Will's had been. Will stole a sideways look at Hannibal, fleetingly meeting the older man's eyes. Worry was evident, though he didn't voice it in the way Will had voiced his own at the state Hannibal was in. Feeling like he owed the man an explanation, Will relayed what had happened between the initial gun shot and the current moment.

"I tripped over some exposed roots and twisted my torso as I tried to stop myself from falling and from the gun going off." Will ignored the pain that blossomed in his right ankle with every step the two men took, each of them supporting the other just as much as themselves. They walked in relative silence for a few moments as they wound their way through the trees. It was going to be a lot of talking once they breached the trees and were confronted by Jack and who knows how many other concerned officials.

"Freeze!" There was sudden movement just a few feet ahead of them and they found themselves face to face with the barrels of two separate guns being aimed at them by two local police officers. One of the officers looked over their battered forms before lowering his own gun and commanding the other officer to stand down as well. They quickly advanced on the two men, noticing how much they were supporting each other.

“We’ve found them, sir. We need medics on the ready.” The same officer that had issued the order spoke into a two way that had been fastened to his utility belt. As soon as he got confirmation for his order, both the gun and the two way found themselves back in their spots on the belt before the man approached them. The other officer followed suit, each of them carefully prying Will and Hannibal apart from each other to support one of them themselves.

.:V:.

“Oh thank god you two are alright.”

Alana rushed forward towards them as they approached the small set of stairs leading into the back of Will’s house. She had been standing beside a stony faced Jack as the man conversed with one of his own men. Her words caught everyone’s attention and soon Will and Hannibal found themselves surrounded by people on all sides, no doubt to help protect them from the threat they didn’t know had already gone.

“Can I get medical assistance?” Jack hollered loudly, his voice echoing across the field and through the house. His voice provoked the sound of nails scratching against wood an barks from deep in the house. Will’s head shot up at that, the thought of his dogs breaking the wall of pain that had surrounded him.

“Are all of my dogs safe?”

Jack seemed to be fighting with an urge to roll his eyes at Will’s question. In his opinion, there were far more important matters to attend to at the moment than the well-being of half a dozen dogs. Knowing Will would press the issue until he received an answer, Jack explained that Alana had rounded them up and that they were safely secured in his bedroom. Before Will could even open his mouth to ask his next question, Alana spoke up as he reached out to help him into the house alongside the officer that was supporting his other side.

“I put their food and water bowls in there with them, Will, they’ll be alright.”

“Thank you.”

Jack turned from a hobbling Will to face a limping Hannibal, the man having requested that he be left to walk on his own. The officer that had been helping him had been sneering at him the entire duration of their journey back to the house. No doubt due to the information he was briefed on Hannibal and Will’s situation, it still surprised the good doctor that some people were unwilling to accept the concept of affection between two men. But being of a European background, Hannibal knew it was just ingrained into their culture and that it was as normal to him as a man and a woman sharing affection.

“Dr. Lecter, would you mind explaining to me why you took it upon yourself to run after two armed men without any means of protecting yourself?”

“I didn’t intend to approach them, Agent Crawford. I merely followed them, hoping to gain a glimpse of any getaways they may have had waiting once they knew Will was coming after them. Despite their actions, both Franklin and his brother Marvin are both too insecure to engage in face to face conflict.”

Jack followed behind Hannibal as the man slowly made his way up the small set of steps, he was favoring his left leg as he did so. Jack looked closely over the man's form, taking in the way his clothes were ripped minimally in multiple places, but what caught his attention the most was the gash he glimpsed between the largest tear in his pant leg and the blood that was staining the left sleeve of his shirt around a bullet hole.

"I caught a glimpse of the car they had waiting for them just on the other side of the wood, I'm prepared to give you the license plate number as soon as you want it."

They both walked through the house to the living room, where Will was seated in the same chair Hannibal usually occupied. His shirt had been removed along with his shoes and socks, his pant legs having been rolled up. His moderately toned upper body was covered in blossoming bruises and small scraps just has Hannibal was sure his own was.

Hannibal took the offered seat Alana had just stood from, it was directly beside Will's chair as a result of the woman shifting it. Another medic entered the room through the front door, prompting another break out of sounds from the dogs down the hall in Will's room. Will licked his lips before he commanded a warning sound to them, quieting them. The medic that was tending to him chided him for his action, the woman having been applying pressure to the newly agitated wound on his middle.

The second medic was a male, he smiled comfortingly at Hannibal and waved for him to take a seat. Hannibal complied and began to remove his own shirt, the bullet wound didn't agitate him for the most part. It just ached minimally, the bullet having skimming his arm more than embedded in it. The medic nodded at Hannibal before beginning to clean the dried blood from his arm.

"Where is young Abigail, Alana?"

The woman turned a concerned expression to him, noticing the way that the wrinkles around his eyes became more apparent as the medic shifted his attention and began to prod at the gash on his leg. Will must've noticed too, because his right hand reached over the small space between their chairs and took hold of Hannibal's left one, squeezing lightly to convey comfort. Alana and Jack both watched the movement, a small smile gracing her pale lips while a frown marred his own.

"She's in the room with the dogs. I think they help to ground her."

"She's welcome to come visit them anytime, you know that Alana. Well, after this whole mess is resolved, that is."

"No one is going to be visiting here for a while, Will. I don't even want you living here at this point."

Will turned to face Jack, the man was standing in front of the fireplace, the many dog beds having been shunted off to the side of the room to allow for the foot traffic. A stern look was on the man's features, he hadn't planned on telling Will of his plans for relocation just yet. He knew the empathy wouldn't accept the offer without a considerable amount of time to think it over, but by then a few more advances on Franklin and Marvin's part may have occurred.

Even when the Ripper had targeted him and entered his home, Jack had refused to relocate, just as Will was about to.

“I’m not leaving my house and no offense, but I don’t want to go back to Hannibal’s.”

Hannibal inclined his head forward, acknowledging to Will that he did not take offense at the statement in the slightest. Hannibal knew it had been difficult for Will to have been at his house for such a long time, despite their relationship, they both yearned for independence in the ways that they had already become accustomed to over the course of their adult lives. Will spared Hannibal a sincere smile before he turned to face Jack again.

Will removed his hand from where it was tangled in Hannibal’s and pushed his glasses up higher on his nose. With the thick plastic rims no longer falling at just the right height to block anyone from looking directly into his eyes, Will could see clearly as he faced forward completely, not ducking his head in the slightest. Will pointedly locked eyes with Jack, catching the man off guard minimally with such a straightforward action. The man didn’t let his shock waver his stance nor his gaze.

“Will, you’re house has been breached twice in a single week. Don’t you see a problem with that?”

“It *is* a problem, but they like to use my house as a memo board. The next time they try to leave a message I’ll shoot both of them without hesitation. I’m tired of not being able to live my life, Jack.”

Alana shifted her weight from foot to foot as she watched the scene. It was obvious the woman agreed with Jack, but she also felt compelled to speak out alongside Will. She sought out Hannibal’s gaze, but the good doctor was too preoccupied with aiming a warning look at Jack as the man crossed his arms over his chest.

“As much solace as that gives me, I do not see a reason for you to put yourself in danger.”

“Oho, you don’t want me to put myself in danger yet you call me for every fucking murder you’ve gotten since I came back to work for you. You’d rather be the one putting me in danger, is that right Jack?”

The atmosphere in the room became charged at Will’s sneered words. It was obvious the empath had been silently waiting for the moment he could say what he just did. Jack nodded at the two medics that had been tending to Will and Hannibal to leave the room. They both had just finished patching Will and Hannibal up and were packing up their kits. At Jack’s motion, they quickened their pace and hastily exited the house.

Alana glanced back and forth between Will and Jack, knowing the both men were too strong willed to back down from one another, especially in a situation such as this. She glanced at Hannibal and confusion flared in her at the man’s expression. Hannibal, too, was staring at Will’s profile. His dark eyes watching the way Will was clenching his jaw in anger, a look of almost reverence was dancing across the doctor’s features. A flare of heat lit up in Hannibal’s abdomen as a small smirk pulled at his lips, a result of seeing Will finally begin to fray at the edges.

“I understand that you’re under a lot of stress, Will. But-“

Alana fell silent at the hard look Jack had sent in her direction, breaking his eye contact with Will only momentarily.

“He can speak for himself, Dr. Bloom. He’s made that abundantly clear.”

“I’ve already been through the whole motion of picking up my life and moving, on more than one occasion. I let my father drag me from city to city until the age of eighteen. I will not let someone else dictate my life now that I’m an adult.”

Jack fell silent at that, his gaze going blank for the briefest of moments. The agent, along with Alana, had access to Will’s files at the Bureau. They had each gone through the motions of checking the empath’s background for any indications of what could have caused the man’s mix of neuroses. But neither of them had ever heard Will utter a word about his father, though they knew it couldn’t have been easy for a young Will to be transferred from school to school, already feeling the strain of being an outcast by his ability. The constant moving could not have helped a poor Will feel stable.

Alana supplied comfort through her grip on Will’s arm, her heart aching despite the professional interest she had in the man. Jack pursed his lips minimally before he spoke, shoving his curiosity down for the time being.

“As inspiring as that is, this time it is for your benefit.”

“I’m not relocating, Jack. I’ve made a home for myself and I refuse to leave it. End of discussion.”

“Perhaps a few days to think over the options would be best at this point.” Alana stepped forward again, her grip leaving Will’s arm. Hannibal shifted in his seat, the action going unnoticed as a door opened and shut down the hall Abigail soon entered the room. Alana approached her and stood beside her, watching from the threshold as Jack finally broke the eye contact that Will had initiated.

“I will go over the options with him, Agent Crawford.” Hannibal spoke as he stood from his spot, pulling his tattered shirt back over his form as he did so. The fabric shielded the man’s build as he buttoned the shirt, leaving it loose to fall over the waist of his pants. Will took notice that Abigail had entered the room and followed Hannibal’s suit, he quieted the pained sounds that tried to escape his lips as he pulled on the stained undershirt back over his own shoulders.

“See that you do, Doctor.”

With that said, Jack left the room to dismiss the personnel from Will’s property, save for a couple of local officers to discuss a rotation of shifts to keep an eye on the house.

.:V:.

Will was seated out on his front porch, his gun resting beside the mug of coffee he had placed on the small table to his right. None of the dogs were lying around him, the man having kept them from getting through the door as he went through it a few hours ago. At first Hannibal had joined him out on the porch, but after they had watched the sun slowly sink beyond the horizon, Hannibal had excused himself to tidy the kitchen up after their small dinner.

Will didn't know how long he had been sitting out there after Hannibal had taken his leave, but the sky had transitioned from a dull blue to a black veil sprinkled with twinkling stars. The cicadas were loud in the surrounding trees, some of them daring to near the lights hanging on either side of the porch only to fly quickly away once the heat wafted over their small, winged bodies.

The door creaked quietly behind him and Will wasn't all that surprised when he felt Hannibal rest his strong hands atop his shoulders hunched shoulders. Hannibal massaged the skin beneath his fingers, hoping to alleviate some of the tension that had taken residence in Will since early that afternoon.

"Come to bed, Will."

Hannibal's voice was smooth in Will's ear as the man leaned forward to position his mouth beside it. His fingers worked a knot on Will's right shoulder, the arm he had flung out to prevent himself from falling earlier that day in the woods. Will's head lulled back despite his resistance, the feel of Hannibal's kneading fingers calming him like nothing else had been able to since the departure of Jack.

"I'm certain they will not approach the house for a few days. The authorities have traced them to a certain part of the country side just on the other side of Baltimore."

Will shifted his head to the side, allowing Hannibal's fingers to knead into the newly exposed flesh of his neck. A quiet moan filtered out of Will's lip at the action, his body responding to the touch more than he cared to admit. He momentarily closed his eyes in bliss before he trained them on the yard in front of him again.

"I just don't want to be caught off guard again. They nearly got Alana this time. And what if they had managed to get Abigail before you sent her inside? What if they had aimed a more fatal hit on you, Hannibal?"

Will's worries flowed from his mouth, the prodding fingers Hannibal was moving against him relaxing him into a state of calm. Will felt himself jump slightly when Hannibal leaned down again and placed a chaste kiss to the younger man's exposed neck. The miniscule smirk that Will felt press to his skin again gave away Hannibal's intentions behind the action.

"You need not worry for others over yourself, Will."

Hannibal wound his arms around Will's chest, his fingers sneaking beneath the hem of Will's undershirt. The searching fingers stilled upon Will's skin just as the older man's lips had done at Will's next words.

“You jus’ don understand.” Will sighed as he leaned back in the chair, his action allowing Hannibal’s hands more leverage to explore his skin. The tang of his southern accent rose the air, proving just how exhausted the younger man was. It was rare for a word tinged with the accent to flow out of Will’s mouth, let alone an entire phrase. Hannibal pressed his lips more firmly against the man’s neck, biting down with the barest hint of pressure that hinted at more to come.

“I can try.” Hannibal’s soothing words were hot against Will’s skin, the man’s fingers resuming their lazy exploration beneath Will’s shirt. Will let the man’s hands roam over his body for a few moments more before he stood from the chair, disentangling himself from the man altogether. Will’s skin sprouted goose bumps where Hannibal’s warm hands and mouth had been connected to his skin at the sudden loss.

Will gingerly crossed the distance from his chair to the railing that surrounded his porch, being mindful not to put too much pressure on his bandaged ankle. He placed his elbows on the railing and crossed his arm, taking pleasure in the fact that the action didn’t bother him as much as it would have a few days ago. Even with the mild set back of twisting his middle earlier that day, the healing stab wound didn’t bother him as much as it had done the first two weeks after the attack.

Sighing, Will hunched over to lay in forehead on his crossed arms. His eyes closed and all he would hear was the sound of the cicadas buzzing mingling with his and Hannibal’s soft breathing. Quiet footsteps signaled to Will that the older man was approaching him, the man’s hands finding their way back over Will’s shoulders, picking up the massage he had been administering before his hands had wandered.

“This is my home, Hannibal. This is where I run to when things get too real, where my dogs have found peace from the world that didn’t want them. It’s where I feel safe, even after all of the crap that’s happened here recently.”

Hannibal was quiet as he thought over the younger man’s quiet words. There was blatant truth in them, Will truly felt at ease here.

“Then perhaps we should escape from reality for a while.” Hannibal shifted his hands to run down Will’s back, feeling the muscles twitch under his touch. A gasp fell from Will’s lips as Hannibal took ahold of his hips, his chest hovering over Will’s back as he moved to stand directly behind him. A shudder wracked the younger man’s back, though the air was warm enough in the late evening.

“Hannibal, there are officers on patrol out here.” Will shied away from Hannibal slightly, his back tensing as realization rained down on him in that instant. Will's eyes shifted across the front yard for an entirely different reason now that Hannibal's hands were getting bold as they caressed the front of his pants. Knowing Will would follow him, Hannibal tightened his hold and pressed his body flush again the man underneath him before moving away and crossing the porch to the front door.

“Then come to bed, my dear Will.”

How could Will possibly say no to that?

Chapter End Notes

My computer has decided to lose all of it's networking hardware, so I'm stuck with my mom's computer for who knows how long. Unfortunately, she doesn't have microsoft word. I'll try my best to keep updating as regularly as I normally do.

Chapter 12

Chapter Summary

Will makes a startling discovery.

Chapter Notes

gently places in front of waiting readers

i hope you enjoy the chapter

scuttles away

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The content hush that had fallen over the house was broken by a small sigh from Hannibal. Will looked up from the book he was reading. The book was one of the few that had chosen to publish Will's old writings when he had first begun to lecture and in his graduate program. It had taken him and Hannibal a considerable amount of searching in the musty attic where Will kept the older things he didn't care to see every day. Will had been so upset that he had to dig around his old belongings that Hannibal had offered his help when he wasn't busy operating his psychiatry office during the day.

Will's eyes were worried as his gaze roamed over the somewhat cluttered table. The side he was sitting at was covered in the displayed book he was reading, a fair few journals that Will had written filled in years ago, some books of reference lay stacked waiting for him should he need them, and a journal opened wide in front of his as he wrote his latest lesson plan down upon the pages. Beyond the mess that was Will's side of the table, the plate that had contained his breakfast of brioche French toast, fruit compote, and sausage was set down next to Hannibal's own empty plate.

Hannibal was seated diagonally from Will, the older man's back to the wall that separated the kitchen and the dining room that they were currently in. The dogs were all in the living room, tired from their morning expeditions outside. Hannibal hummed again, his displeasure had to be at something he was reading on the tablet held carefully in front of him. Will had suggested taking the small walk to the corner store for the newspaper the first morning Hannibal had stayed, but the man hadn't wanted to do so.

Will took in the pristine fabric of today's suit. It was a deep checkered brown suit jacket, paired with solid brown trousers, a sky blue dress shirt, and a paisley tie adorned with gold

and the same sky blue of his shirt. Will had done his best to help Hannibal with his tie earlier that morning but had ended up using it to pull the man back into bed, resulting in a late start to their day. The look on Hannibal's face was carefully calculated, Will noted, the older man's eyes were wrinkled around the edges as he looked down at the article displayed on his tablet with a frown.

"It appears that the Ripper has begun another cycle."

Will dropped the fork he had picked up to pick at a leftover piece of cherry to look at Hannibal with an incredulous expression.

"It's only been…." Will paused for a fraction of a second to figure the time, "a month since he targeted those teenagers. Why would he shorten the time between his murders?"

"Perhaps he was provoked. The victim is none other than Marvin Friodeveaux. We both know how…adamant the man can be."

Will leaned back in his chair, huffing out a sigh as he did so. He looked from what he could see of the article to Hannibal's face. Will blinked to focus his attention on the tall shadow that had risen up behind Hannibal only to let out a small noise of surprise as the figure of the stag came into view. Hannibal's eyes found him, grounding him before he looked back into the corner for it to be empty of anything other than the paint on the wall. The older man followed his gaze, eyes showing something akin to satisfaction when he looked back down at the article.

"I suspect you'll be hearing from Uncle Jack today, seeing as the article was published just this morning. Miss Lounds has taken it upon herself to drag you into the limelight at last."

Will got up from his seat at that and moved to stand beside a still seated Hannibal, resting his right arm on the table as he leaned forward to read the small words. Will's eyes raced through the article, searching for the honorable mention.

"It seems she's been bidding her time to tell the world of your attack and the intrusions into your home until the bigger picture was revealed. Her intuition may be troublesome for us in this case, but it is admirable nonetheless." Will glanced at the title of the article at Hannibal's words.

'Will Graham gains the protection of the Ripper'

"I'm mentioned as well. I'll need to call my lawyer once I get to the practice this morning."

"You shouldn't have too much trouble with this, it's just a tabloid." Will consoled as he momentarily brushed his hand on Hannibal's arm, inching closer to the seated man.

Will glanced at Hannibal beside him before he silently asked for the tablet. Hannibal's grip loosened as Will's own hands wrapped around them to get ahold of the small electronic. Will settled back into his chair, the tablet close to his face as he read the words through his glasses.

“I just want to know why the Ripper targeted Marvin. That has to give us some clues as to who the guy is. Obviously he’s a resident of Baltimore. Again, he’s a classified surgeon, or was at some point because these photos show precision in the cuts made to his body, he only targets those that are impolite to him. He’s an avid reader of Tattle Crime and he was provoked to shorten the time of inactivity between his three to four cluster of murders.”

Hannibal nodded at each little tidbit of information about him as Will listed them off as if on auto-pilot. The younger man was oblivious to the small smirk that turned up the left side of Hannibal’s lips. Hannibal composed himself as he sensed Will tense beside him as he waited for some kind of response. Will must’ve just read through the part about his stabbing three weeks ago.

“Perhaps the two encountered each other and it took a turn for the worse. He may have been indecent and ended up at the Ripper’s dinner table.”

“What did we have for dinner last night?” Will asked without skipping a beat, determined to rule that route out from his racing mind. He didn’t look up from the article, instead his eyes kept moving over the word ‘liver’ as his mind began to buzz with frenzied thoughts.

“We had a traditional pork stir fry of cabbage, carrots, snap peas, ginger, and wild rice.”

Will thought that over, knowing that Hannibal was training a mildly stern look on the side of his face as he continued to avoid eye contact. The pork in last night’s dinner had indeed tasted like pork, and there was no duplicating another meat to mimic the unique taste of it. All in all, there hadn’t been anything out of the ordinary with their meal. Will had actually praised Hannibal for being so well adapted as to range from Asian dishes to French dishes, seeing as the two were completely different and difficult in their own ways.

“Will.”

Will finally looked up at Hannibal’s face, not quite sure what expression the older man was wearing, though it looked slightly offended if the way his faint eyebrows were turned up at the ends closest to the bridge of his nose. There was a hint of amusmant in Hannibal’s eyes as will chanced a glance into them. Will shook his head to get the image of the stag out of his head, the eyes of which were eerily similar to Hannibal’s, both of which were staring back at him. Will blinked his eyes more to rid the vision of the stag from behind Hannibal than to break the contact. The older man suppressed the urge to grin again, Will’s mind truly was a magnificent thing.

“I’m sorry. Habit and paranoia.”

“All is forgiven, my dear Will.”

Will sighed before placing the tablet down atop the books and journals that littered his end of the table and rubbed at his face. He moved to turn off the device before searching for his cell phone among the mess on his side of the table.

“It was pork, Will, I assure you.”

Hannibal allowed his face to display the honesty he was sincere in, he hadn't wanted to serve Will the liver of one Marvin Friodeveaux so quickly after having killed the man. It was a personal affair this time, that barbarian of a man had fired Hannibal's own gun at him, even after all of the help he had given to the man. Will watched as small signs of emotion flitted across Hannibal's face, none of them lasting long enough for the younger man to read them, though he could sense the worry that was coming from him.

"I know, I just don't know what I'm doing anymore." Will rubbed at his face again, allowing for Hannibal to quietly reach for and close his tablet within its case, stand up from his chair, and make his way to stand behind Will. Will didn't notice the movements, he did notice, however, when Hannibal placed his strong hands atop his shoulders. The small jump wracking his body proving as much.

"I apologize for leaving the dishes, but I really must get to work." Hannibal's breath was warm across Will's left ear. The younger man shuddered as a memory from earlier that morning resurfaced.

"I've got it, don't worry." Will moved to place a parting kiss on Hannibal's smooth cheek before he reached for his cell phone that peeked out from underneath a book. "I might be on scene all day though, so just put my plate from dinner in the oven to keep warm and I'll heat it up when I get home."

"Of course, my dear Will."

Hannibal's hands lingered atop Will's shoulders for a few more moments and the man's mouth teased warm breath across Wills ear before Hannibal finally placed a farewell kiss on the man's temple and left the room. Will sighed as he brought his steno pad closer to him and began to write out a list of 'Hannibal's habits' down upon the paper.

.:V:.

"Alright, Will?" Jack's gruff voice was loud in the confines of the vehicle he and Will were currently seated in, making their way to the other side of Baltimore city. Will had called Jack, just as the older man had been preparing to call him.

Jack had already been on his way to pick Will up, not wanting the man to drive all the way to Quantico and then Baltimore on his bad ankle. Despite the sprain not being dire, Hannibal and Jack had both suggested a break from driving for a week. Something the empath was none too happy about, it was bad enough he didn't feel like he could walk his dogs and now he couldn't drive too far.

Will sighed his answer, the heat of the day wasn't overbearing but it was starting to get to Will, making his headache double in strength. His thoughts had been going in circles over the similarities between the hallucination of the stag Will so often experienced and Hannibal while the man had waited for his ride. There were some things Will wondered about the good doctor. How and why he had come to be so precise in his actions, for instance. It was as if the man had experienced something so barbaric as to prompt him to act in such a well-mannered way.

The more practical portion of Will's mind supplied the reason of Hannibal's European descent. They tended to be more civilized and well-mannered as a whole, it was an integral part of their culture. European descent. Will mouthed the words not expecting the bad taste they left in his mouth afterwards. Mentally scolding himself, Will took out the steno pad he had brought along with him from his back pocket. He flipped the pages until he was somewhere in the middle of the pad of paper. He reached for the pen in his shirt pocket and scribbled down 'European descent' underneath the traits Hannibal had in common with the Ripper.

Will just stared at the pad of paper in his hand for a long while, prompting Jack to chance glances over at him. Will's brow furrowed as he went down the list on the left of the page which contained Hannibal's traits and then down the right side of the page which held the Ripper's traits. Will looked up almost as if he was being forced to and out the window. Will spied the running form of the stag just through the dense trees that lined the side of the road outside Will's window.

"Shit."

Will's muttered word caught the full attention of Jack, who turned to fully face him. The expression on the older man's face was demanding. Will looked at the pad of paper once more before tucking it back into his pocket, the pen going along with it.

"Tell me what jump you've made, Will."

Jack's tone left no room for rebuttal or argument, he wanted an answer and he wanted it now. It was rare for Will to curse and in the presence of someone who he deemed important, official. Will tried to suppress his frantic thoughts and turned to aim his gaze on Jack's nose.

"The Ripper targeted Marvin for a completely personal reason. Something more substantial than his gruff nature or a bad run in with the man."

It was because Marvin had shot at the Ripper. Will thought back to the day Alana and Abigail had surprised them at his house. How Hannibal and Abigail had been the two people outside when shots were first fired. Will clenched his eyes shut and tried to calm his fastening breathing as he tried to recall where Hannibal was standing when the first shot had been fired to break the peace of that day. Hannibal had been standing about ten feet from the window, directly in the line of fire between it and where the shot had rang out from the tree line beside Will's house.

"He- The Ripper was just minding his own business the day it happened. He hadn't had any intention of when or with whom he would start his next string of murders."

Will kept his eyes closed as he remembered the gunshot wound to Hannibal's arm, the man had obviously been caught off guard the moment it had happened. He had thought himself safe even as he had given chase after the men who had targeted Will because of their relationship. Will felt his heart jerk at the thought of his relationship with Hannibal.

It was what had started the whole situation he was in. The Ripper had been silent, Hannibal had been silent for nearly two years between his last batch of murders and the ones he had yet

to commit and willingly allow to be found. That was until he had met Will. Will mentally cursed himself for being the person he was while simultaneously blessing that fact because it both brought out Hannibal's more personal extracurricular activities back into the light yet flourished a relationship with which Will felt at ease in, even despite the epiphany that continued to raddle his mind.

"Marvin must have been trying to pull a stunt in a store to divert attention from something bigger. And the Ripper merely got in the way."

Will lied flatly, even as he felt Jack's scrutinizing gaze he felt his heart rate slow down as he thought over how Hannibal had acted out the night of shooting. The good doctor had been more passionate that night, even as the both were mindful of that day's injuries Will had been busying himself with insurance papers, at will of Jack, in order to have it recoup the cost of the damages for the FBI who had chosen to act quickly and make the repairs. Hannibal had been rather passionate even as he had tried to convince Will to come to bed.

Will had seen the stag that night in his dreams, though the beast had been as content as he had felt. The stag, Will racked his brain for a hint of what it could symbolize. Only to sit ramrod straight in his seat as an old Alquanian legend was pulled from the depths of his memory. It was what a man would transform into after a prolonged period of time in which he had consumed human flesh. Cannibalism. Will felt his mouth dry and was then overwhelmed by the acidic taste of vomit.

Will quickly swallowed the sensation to empty his stomach. He thought back to the meals he had shared with Hannibal. Most of them had tasted very tune to what Hannibal had told him they were, right down the meat of choice. Those rare instances in which the meat had tasted off but Will had shucked up to the seasonings and garnishes of choice suddenly made very much sense to him.

But despite all of the connections Will was making, he felt no fear of Hannibal. The man he had let him get closer to him than anybody else. Believe it or not, Will felt it was safe to share his connection with the man whom it was about. If Hannibal hadn't done anything to harm him up until this point, it meant that the man had seen something akin to an opportunity in Will. Will hoped it wasn't just a prolonged, complicated game of cat and mouse that ended up with Hannibal sexually satisfied and him dead.

.:V:.

Will felt his stomach lurch as he took in the displayed body of Marvin Friodeveaux, it was a particularly gruesome scene, just as the last Ripper murder had been committed before the nearly two year gap that preceded the more current ones. That one had been shockingly more brutal than the previous murders, the multiple stabs and injections to simulate the Wound Man illustration of an earlier time coming to the forefront of Will's mind.

The empath couldn't shake the overwhelming sense of Hannibal as he circled the body as it was suspended upon the wall of a silo.

The hands and feet had stakes going through them, helping to pin the man to the sheets of metal material that made up the structure. The precise intricacies of where the knife had been

used seemed blatantly obvious now that Will had made the one connection he had been yearning for after months of hard work. Hannibal was so graceful in the kitchen and no doubt had been in the emergency room as a young surgeon. And he was just as graceful as Will reconstructed the murder. In all three professions, it was obvious that Hannibal had favored the use of a blade to anything else.

Will haphazardly shoved his glasses back atop the bridge of his nose. The sweat that had beaded up across the small of his back and on his forehead wasn't from the bearable heat of the day, but because of the atmosphere that had settled over the crime scene once he was no longer re-enacting the murder. Will did his best to discretely straighten the wrinkles in his shirt, his hands moving a little lower than his belt to press down on the buckle. He felt sick, even as the small sensations of arousal flitted across his body.

This murder had lended Will the experience of empathy not as the killer but as a bystander, watching as Hannibal had meticulously committed his murder. Chills shivered down Wills spine even as he moved to wipe a tissue over his dripping forehead. Jack traced the move on the sidelines of the crime scene, noticing the way that Will was rather on edge. The agent filed away the reaction to dissect at a later time, momentarily attributing it to the fact that the now deceased man Will was staring at had targeted him in violence.

"This was a point of humiliation." Will spoke loudly, signaling to Jack that he was finished viewing the scene alone. The empath indicated the stakes that had been put through Marvin's wrists instead of his hands seeing as they had been cut off while the man was still alive. "In early history up to the 18th Century it was commonplace to cut off a sinner's hands and then display them, the hands that is, in the town center."

Will took a few steps back as his mind replayed the screams of Marvin as his hands were severed from his body. The more personal vendetta that Hannibal had displayed with a precise stab to the same spot on Hannibal's arm that had been injured was obvious now, Will mused as he took in the knife embedded all the way to the hand guard into Marvin's arm. Hannibal hadn't made a sound during the whole murder and setting up of the display, not shocking Will in the slightest. Hannibal was a quiet man in all activities, why would this be any different?

"This case is similar, yet different to accommodate the Ripper's most common attribute of putting the whole body on display."

"So you're telling me that the Ripper was somehow humiliated by this man and in turn humiliated him in death. Putting him here for people to see from the busy road."

Will nodded his head in answer. Before he could even open his mouth to ask if he could be taken back home, Jack was calling Beverly over from where she stood beside Brian and Jimmy in front of a propped up computer on the hood of a police cruiser.

.:V:.

Will sat motionless in the dining room, the mess he had made earlier that day still taking up his portion of the table. Though the plates were now gone, washed, and settled into their places within his cabinets, Will felt as if he had just eaten the breakfast that had been served

on them. He hadn't eaten since that morning, though Beverly had tried to coax him into a lunch date at a sit down restaurant in an attempt to help relax the man. She was worried for him, having been calling Jack to keep updated on Will's status of recovery.

Will sighed and began to straighten up the mess he had left in his rush to the crime scene, only for his hands to begin shaking enough for him to visibly notice. He was nervous, though not because of the revelation he had made. He was nervous to be facing Hannibal after doing so. He had gone through the motions of dissecting their relationship at last, and was surprised he didn't feel all that differently about the man.

Hannibal had always been kind to him, harsh when need be, but never overbearingly so. It was obvious the older man felt some form of love for him, if his actions of hunting down and murdering one of his persistent attacker was any indication. Though, Hannibal had gained both the means of yet another extravagant meal and personal vindication alongside the assurance that the man wouldn't cause any more harm to Will.

The book in Will's hand found itself back where it had been laying on the table. The quiet rumbling of Hannibal's car could be heard through the screen door in the living room. Will sighed as he shoved himself from the table and stood from his chair. He had to be smart about this. The last thing he wanted to do was raise Hannibal's alarms the moment the two of them interacted. Will listened to Hannibal's even footfalls as the older man made his way up the small dirt path leading up to the porch in front of the farmhouse.

The door opening and closing sent Will's heartbeat into overdrive. The rustling of fabric could be heard as Hannibal relieved himself of his suit jacket and his briefcase in the living room. He paused to scent the air, noticing the slight sweetness of infection that he had been staving off of Will for the past couple of weeks along with the resignation that Will had subjected himself to.

"I was wondering when you would consciously make the connection, my dear Will."

Hannibal's accented voice was even, no hint of anger or surprise at having been discovered as one of the more feared serial killers in recent history marring his beautiful voice. Will felt the relief of hearing Hannibal's voice wash over him before he stepped into the living room, being mindful of the dogs that had stood to greet Hannibal by way of sniffing and shuffling at his feet. The tension of his clenched jaw began to cause an ache and Will opened his mouth minimally in order to pop the disks within the structure back into their normal positions before he spoke.

"The symbolism of the stag finally clicked into place. Like the missing puzzle piece that had been hiding in the box all along." Will felt his arms tingle as if they had been asleep, the characteristic feeling Will compared to the sight of static coursing over his nerves as he crossed his arms and ran his hands gingerly over each elbow. "My mind was working the whole time, though my conscious wasn't quite ready to accept it."

"Indeed. Your mind felt compelled to fabricate the figure of the stag in place of where it could not envision me, hoping that by incorporating certain emotions and attributes you typically associated with me into the figure of the stag would aid you in making the connection."

Hannibal noticed the way Will was trying to massage the feeling back into his arms He pictured Will returning home and settling down somewhere to sit motionless for a long period of time as he came to terms with what his mind had been compelling him to understand. Taking mercy on the man's already injured body, Hannibal closed the distance between himself and Will. Will didn't make a move to put the space back in between them, which Hannibal took as a small victory.

"Though you are trying you best, you won't rid yourself of the sub-space sensation in your arms like that." Hannibal slowly brought his arms out in front of him and moved to reach for Will's, allowing the man ample time to deny him should he want to. Will watched the man as he moved towards him, wanting the reassurance that Hannibal's touch would bring.

"Here, allow me." Hannibal spoke softly as he lightly rested his hands over Wills own. The younger man dropped his hands, allowing Hannibal to massage his adept fingers into his still tingling skin. The soothing touch relaxed Will even as the severity of the conversation charged the atmosphere of the room. Will could feel Hannibal's concentrated gaze on his moving hands, the personal contact grounding him slightly.

"It is a wonder that I did not return to your home to find Jack Crawford and a team of FBI officers awaiting my arrival." Hannibal glanced up into Will's watching eyes, waiting for the man to reveal his thoughts. The older man could see them flitting across the icy blue eyes of the younger man, but they were swirling in such a way that prevented him from properly gauging them.

"I couldn't do that to you, Hannibal, you know that." Will's eyes hardened at he spoke, conveying to Hannibal that he was having a hard time finding words. "I've been going through everything in my mind since it clicked. I actually…understand why you choose the victims that you do."

Will thought over the reports and information he, Beverly, Jimmy, and Brian had managed to collect on each of the victims Hannibal had taken and allowed them to discover. Each of them had records of threadbare crimes that ranged from public disturbance to theft. It was obvious each of them had somehow offended the well put together individual that was Hannibal in some way, prompting the man to take action in order to prevent them from continuing to act in the manners that they had.

"Most people would not try to understand what I do, nor why I do it."

Hannibal's hands were warm on Will's bare forearms, the older man having shifted his attention to the sore muscles along them. He was doing his best to keep the conversation light, despite the heavy subject. He didn't want to speak only for Will to take something the wrong way and change his resolve to accept Hannibal as he was.

"There are plenty of other people that feel empathy in much the same way that I do."

Wills words were hushed, giving away the melancholy feelings that had taken over him. Hannibal's hands stilled upon Will's arms, taking a gentle hold of them in favor of continuing their soothing movements. Will was watching the older man's hands, even after they stilled

on his form. He couldn't bear to bring his eyes up to meet Hannibal's searching ones. Steeling himself, Will tore his hands from Hannibal's grip and backed away from the man.

"Why did you choose me?" Wills loud words prompted the dogs that had been in the living room to scatter throughout the house, leaving the quickly charging atmosphere of the front room. "I am a nobody! You've accomplished all of these great things in foreign countries, continuing to do so here even now. You take action against those that you and society deem unfit to interact with. Despite the fact that you partake in cannibalism, you're so fucking put together. You have self-worth, you have money, you have your sanity. I feel like a charity case you've taken on to fill your time. I don't understand how someone like you could possible want to interact with someone like me."

Hannibal's surprise at the empath's words was obvious on his sharp features. He hadn't expected Will to return to his self-depreciating train of thought in light of what he had discovered. But it was obvious that the empath had continued to struggle with feelings of inadequacy when compared to Hannibal.

"I'm a mess. I'm just a walking case study! My empathy is the only thing that allows me to understand you."

"You don't believe the words you are saying, Will. You know perfectly well that your empathy only *aids* you in understanding me. You understand even now, when you aren't actively empathizing the situation." A disappointed frown marred Hannibal's features at the loud words issuing from Will's mouth. It was obvious that the hysteria was finally hitting Will. The man spouting words to distance himself from the one person he had accepted into his world more so than anyone else.

"What if I don't want to?" Will took another step back as Hannibal had taken one forward. Suddenly, Hannibal closed the space between them, circling the younger man in his arms. Will struggled against the man's hold even as he felt a hard lump form in his throat and tears welled up in his eyes.

"Please calm down, Will. Everything is alright, I don't want you to work yourself up."

Hannibal felt Will's struggling wane, knowing that the man felt the effects of his rash movements in his abdomen. A quiet, pained sound fell from Will's lips as Hannibal shifted one of his hands to rest against the still healing wound through Will's shirt. It was hot as pain blossomed from the spot and began to reverberate through Will's entire body.

"I can understand how this is a lot to take in and you were doing so well. But you must refrain from spouting lies in an attempt to distance yourself from the situation at hand. I know that you don't mean them, but I would rather you not speak them in the first place."

Will was acutely aware of Hannibal's hand positioned over his abdomen, though the man was sure it was more of a protective measure than a threatening one. Will sensed that Hannibal was waiting for some sort of response from him, so he nodded his head in silent agreement. He relaxed into Hannibal's hold, the tension that had been pulling his body tight stirring in him a migraine. He tucked his head beneath Hannibal's chin and nodded against the older man's neck once more, trying to convey his apology.

“I know it’s a lot to take in. I just ask that you speak with me about anything that concerns you, Will. You will take comfort in knowing that I had long ago resolved to keep you, you are important to me.”

Will finally brought his arms from sides and wrapped them around Hannibal’s back, signaling to the man that he wouldn’t do anything to compromise their relationship.

Chapter End Notes

Hey there, readers. I have a very important notice for all of you. My internet is currently down due to decreased income and lack of payment. I apologize for the long delay with this update, but as you can imagine, I am having a little money management trouble.

I will try and update sometime within the next week or so, but it all depends on how inspired I am as well as if I don't mind dragging myself down the street to the coffee shop again.

I appreciate all of the kudos given and the comments left while I was not updating or even aware of it (:

Chapter 13

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal sort things out only for them to fall to pieces.

Chapter Notes

shuffles in

hey there readers, here is the update you guys have been waiting for. i'm sorry it took such a long time to get it to you

shuffled out

Will tried to remove the cap on the bottle that held the last dose of his antibiotics, his frustration growing as his fingers couldn't gain the purchase they needed to effectively twist the cap off. A low, frustrated growl sounded at the base of his throat before he gave up and threw the prescription bottle back onto the bedside table in front of him. The pills raddled against the acidic orange of the bottle as it rocked on its sides before stilling.

Sighing heavily, Will threw himself back onto the bed, no longer supporting himself on his right arm and leaning to face the bedside table from where he laid in bed. Beside him, Hannibal stirred lightly, the sounds of Will in the early morning prompting his mind begin waking up. A large hand was flung behind the older man and settled on Will's stomach, seeking out reassurance that the man was alright. Will just stared at the hand resting on him for a few moments before he took it into his own.

Hannibal seemed to relax marginally at the action, his wide shoulders easing from where they were facing Will, who lay on his back once again. Glancing at the clock on Hannibal's bedside table, Will noted just how early it was. He had been woken up by a painful throbbing in his ankle and abdomen, echoes of the pain that caused the initial injuries jarring him awake as he relived them in his sleep.

The stag still wound its way through his dreams, occasionally taking the form of Hannibal which it symbolized all along.

He took a shuddering breath as he reached over to try and pry the cap off of the painkillers Hannibal had renewed the prescription for just the other day. His back ached as his shoulders tensed with the force of trying to get the cap off of the bottle.

Getting fed up with not being able to access any of his medication, Will let go of Hannibal's warm hand and brought the bottle to his mouth and tried to twist the lid off with his teeth.

"Fuck!" Will shouted as he tossed the bottle across the room to bounce off of the adjacent wall and roll along the floor of his bedroom. The smack of the plastic hitting the dry wall that made up the house paired with Will's exclamation caused Hannibal to bolt upright on his side of the bed. The older man's features were rugged with sleep, his eyes were focused though, searching for the cause of the disturbance.

Will aimed a pale glare at the previously sleeping man, jealous that the man was able to fall asleep and stay that way. Hannibal had recovered well from his injuries, not even gaining a scar to show for any of them.

Will, however, was still struggling with his sprained ankle in light of tripping over one of the dogs just before he had been expecting a clean bill of health from both Hannibal and the hospital that had treated him immediately after his stabbing. The fall had been bad. The dog had been fine, which Will was grateful for. But he hadn't been so lucky. His side had twisted as he tried to prevent himself from falling on his face and breaking his nose, irritating the scab that had formed over his abdominal wound.

He brought his tired, red rimmed eyes up to Hannibal's dark ones, trying to convey to the man that he just wanted the pain to go away through the semi darkness of the room. Shushing him quietly, Hannibal leaned forward and brought his forehead to rest against Will's slightly warm and sweaty one. Will closed his eyes in a long blink as Hannibal's cooler skin helped to console him.

"I would appreciate it if you could open the pills for me."

"You need to only wake and ask me, Will." Hannibal spoke softly, letting a touch of his annoyance at Will's stubborn behavior into his voice. The older man moved back to his side of the bed before removing his legs from under the covers and placed his feet on the floor. He rounded the edge of the bed and swooped down fluidly to retrieve the bottle of painkillers from the middle of the room, halfway between the bed and the small cluster of furniture beside the door.

"It shouldn't be so damn hard to open a pill bottle." Will muttered heatedly under his breath, exhausted and fed up with the dull ache that he associated with being awake.

Hannibal tossed the pouting man a fond smile as he easily removed the cap from the bottle and retrieved two of the pills from within it before recapping it. He reached over and gathered the last of the antibiotic pills and offered them to Will. Will eagerly reached for them, not waiting for the water that Hannibal was reaching for next. He felt his adam's apple bob as he swallowed each of the pills, knowing that the action had caught Hannibal's attention.

Taking the cool glass of water being offered to him, Will glanced into Hannibal's hungry eyes. Both men knew Hannibal had a fondness of Will's strong jaw and neck. Drinking until the glass was empty, Will settled back onto the pillows he had shoved against the headboard before placing the glass back onto the bedside table. Will let a content sigh fall from his lips as the medicine began to take effect.

“I can’t wait until I’m recovered enough to get back to lecturing.” Will sighed as he closed his eyes against the sound of the dogs stirring around the house. Though he had only been relieved for a week, he really did miss getting out of the house and making the drive to Quantico. Despite the fact that Jack would want to call him for every case he received, Will wanted to get back to the Bureau. He had found solace in the fact that Beverly, Brian, and Jimmy would welcome him to any of their meetings or if they happened across each other throughout the day.

They didn’t demand that he interact with them as much as they did with each other and their own friends. But it was nice to have a conversation with one of them every once in a while between lectures and during cases. Beverly had seemed to gravitate towards him, even before this whole mess had started, her humor and ‘take no shit’ attitude was a breath of fresh air compared to the way everyone else treated him.

“The time will come soon enough.” Hannibal’s voice was alarmingly close. Will’s eyes flew open a nanosecond before the older man had leaned forward and placed a chaste kiss against his lips. Hands preceded the kiss, carefully roaming the expanse of Will’s bare chest. Groaning as Hannibal’s hands found his hips and took hold of them, Will leaned up to deepen the kiss. Tongues met and Will ran his along Hannibal’s bottom lip, worrying the skin there with his teeth.

Hannibal was slowly draping his body over Will’s, his knees finding purchase in the cushion of the bed. Once his body was flush against Will, Hannibal began to trail open mouthed kisses along the man’s neck. Will swallowed a moan, his adam’s apple bobbing beside Hannibal’s mouth, teasing the man. In retaliation, Hannibal ground his hips down into Will’s. Their arousals were hard against each other through the thin fabric of Will’s boxer shorts and Hannibal’s silk bottoms. Will’s hand latched onto the man’s shoulders, searching for purchase to buck up against him.

“Oh mah gawd.” Will’s smooth voice crooned as Hannibal started up a rough pace, their arousals rubbing together in sweet friction. Spots of light began dancing behind Will’s eyes as he began to feel jolts of heat flash in his middle. Hannibal’s movements paused for a moment before Will found himself sharing a passionate kiss. Hands began to drag the fabric of Will’s boxer shorts down, exposing his member to the cooler temperature of the room. A sharp intake of breath warmed Hannibal’s face as the man removed his own shorts before brushing a hand over Will’s flushed member.

Breaking the kiss, Hannibal shifted them so that he was resting his wide shoulders against the headboard and Will was straddling his lap. The younger man seemed momentarily stunned at the shift in positions, but locked his lips with Hannibal’s the moment he recovered. Will nipped with his teeth at Hannibal’s lips thought they were already kiss swollen. When Will bit down a little too roughly, Hannibal’s hands landed on Will’s hips in pleasure. The scent of copper rose to the air and the taste of blood blossomed on both of their tongues.

Hannibal was nestled hotly against Will’s backside, something the younger man was all too aware of. Leaning slightly back, Will brought his mouth down to trail hot, openmouthed kisses along Hannibal’s jaw and neck. The older man bucked at the attention Will lavished on his skin, having arrived home the previous night too late to enjoy Will’s company. Will made

his way down Hannibal's muscled front, leaving suck bruises all along the way as he inched lower and lower.

Hannibal's breath hitched as Will nosed the coarse hairs leading down to his groin. Before the man could catch his breath, Will was taking him into his mouth, moving his tongue around the leaking head in a magnificent motion. Will glanced up to see that Hannibal had arched his neck at the action, his face was contorted in unadultered pleasure where Will could see it. Humming in satisfaction at his lover's reaction, Will began to move his head in an even, steady bobbing motion. Hannibal reached out his hands to tangle in Will's curls, pulling at the roots as the younger man moved his hot mouth around him.

Just as his stomach began to tighten with his release and his hands gripped tightly in dark curls Will's mouth was leaving Hannibal's member with an obscene pop.

Glancing down as he untangled his hands proved to be rewarding for Hannibal as he watched Will wipe at his mouth the back of his right hand and lick his lips, catching the essence of Hannibal that had coated his lips. The icy blue of Will's eyes was trained on him, watching Hannibal watch him. Before Hannibal could mourn the loss of Will's hot mouth, he was moaning out as Will settled himself back into his lap, his bottom brushing against his sensitive member suggestively.

"Whatcha gonna do?" Will whispered into his ear as he leaned forward to nibble along the lobe. An almost animalistic growl sounded deep in Hannibal's throat as the older man roughly grapped Will's hips and began to move against the teasing man. Will choked as his breath left his lungs, his body overwhelmed by the pleasure he was experiencing.

Still feeling a little teasing in the confidence his position was lending him, Will ground back down on Hannibal before lifting himself up enough to hover over Hannibal's member. He locked eyes with the man below him as he spoke, very aware of the hold Hannibal had on him.

"Whatcha gonna do, cher?"

Hannibal retaliated by pulling him down roughly onto him, entering him with the help of Will's saliva. Will threw his head back as he moaned out his pleasure, the warm waves of it washing through his middle. Hannibal smirked up at Will as he began to thrust up into him at a steady, rough pace, using his hold on Will to bring the slightly man down onto him.

.:V:.

"Why are you walking funny?"

Will started at the question, tossing a searching gaze over the Bureau's car filled parking lot. His eyes felt heavy and the action took a lot of energy for the poor man. Beverly Katz stepped out from behind her vehicle, signaling to Will that she had been waiting for him to show up, most likely to escort him into the building. She looked him up and down as he slowed his pace for her to catch up but didn't stop completely. The man cursed the slight limp he was walking with, the events of last night flashing in his mind's eyes to spur on a stab of

heat and arousal in his middle. Suddenly, he felt as if every mark Hannibal had made on him was illuminated, calling attention to them.

Fighting the flush that was coloring his neck and ears, Will grimaced a smile at Beverly as she took up the space on his right, her heels clicking merrily. She eyed him out of the corner of her eye, taking in the way Will's curls were bouncy from his shower, his clothes were pressed, and he seemed to be completely back to normal. Except for the slight influence of his gait, he was favoring his left leg a little more than his right one. She smirked to herself as she recalled Jack saying that Hannibal wouldn't allow Will to return to work until he was fit.

"Late night escapade with your man?"

Her smirk widened at the sputtering Will contributed as a response. She looked him head on to see the flush had deepened and his eyes gave way to the emotions coursing through him. Taking pity on the man who looked as if he was trying to now compose himself, she nodded her head.

"Alright, alright. That was a little forward of me."

"Only a little." Will tossed her a real smile, even if it did look a little like a glare. The sarcasm in his tone was obvious, but hinted that he had already moved past the question.

"How have you been, Will?"

Sighing, Will looked into her eyes for a few seconds to convey that he was truly alright despite his words. "Decent. My sleeping medication isn't really helping me, but it help keep Jack and Hannibal at ease. For the most part."

Chuckling, Beverly reaches for the door into the Bureau before Will could, she tosses him a cheeky smile before waving him in and then following his lead.

"Jack was trying everything to call you in before today, but we've been giving him trouble over it. Alana and I."

That stopped Will in his tracks, he turned to watch Beverly walk away from him and the direction of her own small office in the back of the building. "Don't worry about it too much, it's just a lecture. What harm could it do now that you're fit enough to have a kinky night with your lover?"

Before Will could muster his blush down and a response, the woman had disappeared and left him alone in the main hallway.

.:V:.

"And that is the telling factor of whether or not your suspect was directly involved. People tend to hide the factors of their lives that they are proud of, in order to avoid being judged on such a big part of who they perceive themselves to be. If a suspect readily agrees or infers that they have been involved, it is a very minimal percentage that they actually have been.

I want a mock up of the denials made by infamous criminals within the last fifteen years to be on my desk by next weeks lecture."

Will turned away from the students watching faces in favor of closing his computer and beginning to stack the pages of work he had written out for his lecture. Sighing, Will brought back to light the thought that him writing things out was useless. He remembered every little thing related to his subject and didn't really know why he sat down to write them all out in the first place. Shuffling his papers together to straighten and line up the already immaculate stack, Will didn't notice the slim shadow looming towards him, he was too busy staring at the top of the papers.

When a hand reached out to still the motion of him lining the papers up on the desk top, he nearly lost his grip on the stack and scattered them. A large hand gripped his own as he tried to gain the purchase he had on the papers, stopping him from concentrating on them. Startling, Will looked up to meet the concerned gaze of Hannibal.

Shaking his head to gather himself, Will checked his watch only to feel the hand that belonged to Hannibal disappear from his own. The loss of the comforting weight prompted Will to look back up, only to see no one standing in the room with him. The stack of papers littered across the top of the desk as Will lost his grip on them and began to rub at his face with his cold hands. Checking his watch again proved to the confused man that he had indeed lost time again.

Leaving the papers where they laid scattered about, Will picked up his bag and rushed out of the classroom.

.:V:.

The low, almost nonexistent rumble of an engine sounded up the driveway. Will was oblivious to the sound as he continued to chop the garlic he had laid on a cutting board in front of him, taking his time as he waited for the sizzling of the pan on the stove to pick up before he needed to add the garlic. The smell of chopped garlic, sizzling oil, and baking starched greeted Hannibal in a lovely melody as he walked quietly through the door and into the farm house he was beginning to spend more and more of his time at.

The periodic sound of a knife hitting a wooden cutting board played in his ears just as the sizzling of what the man would guess was some sort of green bean in the pan occupying the stove. Hannibal found himself smiling a fond smile as he placed his bag down on small table that the home phone sat on in the dining room. He would've set it on the dining table but Will had taken it upon himself to set the table with the only set of matching dishware that he owned.

"Oh, you're home early." Will mused as he walked into the dining room with a glass an filled with seasoned and chopped potatoes fresh out of the oven. Will placed the pan on top of a pot holder in the middle of the table. As he turned around to make his way back into the kitchen to fetch the rest of the dishes, Hannibal noticed the way he was still favoring his left leg to his right as he walked. Smirking to himself, Hannibal followed Will into the swirl of aromas that was the kitchen.

Will was busy removing the chicken he had lightly crusted in a mix of herbs, break crumbs, and balsamic vinegar out of the oven. Brushing his hand lightly over the younger man's backside as he walked by, Hannibal moved to the sink and scrubbed his hands. Will tossed him a pale glare as he walked back into the kitchen from placing the chicken on their plates in the dining room. Hannibal just smiled dazzlingly at him as he picked up the serving bowl of stir fried green beans and snap peas that Will was reaching for.

"Shall we have wine with dinner?"

"I was thinking of some Merlot, actually. It's breathing in the dining room."

Will grabbed the glasses from the counter and lead the way into the dining room.

"May I ask what all of this is for, my dear Will? I haven't missed an anniversary have I?"

"Oh, no, no, no." Will placated before Hannibal could begin to think back over their time together. He set a wine glass in front of the two set places and pulled out the chair for Hannibal before sitting himself down. He served the potatoes and the chicken while he had run in here and Hannibal washed his hands.

"I had a really…confusing day. I cooked to relieve you of it and to help focus myself again."

"Nonsense, I will gladly cook for you whenever you shall want it."

"Yeah, I-I know. I was just really lost there for a while. Like when I first started losing time and began hallucinating you in stag form."

"I do not want to tread into unwarranted territory, so excuse any disrespects I may give voice to." Hannibal paused as he brought a small bite of chicken to his mouth and chewed the moist, plump piece of poultry. He smiled at Will to calm the man as well as convey that the meat was indeed delicious despite the fact that it wasn't Hannibal's favored meat. "But perhaps we should set up an appointment with one of my old colleagues for a brain scan."

Will was silent for a long time, eating from his plate to fill the time as he thought over what Hannibal had said. It made sense for the man to suggest such a thing. They had both thought that the hallucinations of the stag and loss of time were a telling sign of Will's mind repressing the discovery he had made so long ago. But both had persevered, even in light of Will realizing what had been right in front of him.

"I think it's about time to get one, yeah." Will sighed as he lowered the knife and fork in his grip to align with the top of the table. He looked across the table at Hannibal and found the man composed, though there was a glint in his eyes that gave way to the warning he was ready to voice lest Will had denied the action.

"I worry about you, Will." Hannibal went back to his meal, gracefully eating the meal that Will had made *for* him.

"A lot of people worry over me, or what would happen if I wasn't around at least."

"Both a good and bad thing to be sure."

Their conversation was interrupted by the ringing of the home phone. Sighing at the sound, Will carefully placed his utensils down on the table and pushed his chair away from it. He reached over to the small table by the door into the kitchen and grasped the phone in a shaking hand. The second he had pressed the ‘answer’ button, the gruff voice of Jack sounded loud in the air.

“Will, Friodeveaux is after Abigail. She was allowed free time this afternoon but she never returned to the facility.”

Chapter 14

Chapter Summary

Hello, my dear lovely readers and followers!
I know quite some time has passed since this story was relevant, or updated
life is life, and has kept me busy

The current state of things has caused me to return home (across the country from where I had settled) in the face of losing my job and independence, I found myself reading over this piece and wanting to continue the story a bit more. I am unsure of how far I will, though, seeing as the series varies vastly from what I've taken away from it, but it should be a fun, entertaining journey!

Here is a small chapter to get back into the swing of things, so please be kind c:

Abigail turned another corner, following the paved path that lead into the park, fully aware that her follower would make the dame move as her. She had been drinking a latte at a cafe in the neighborhood surrounding the downtown area, just on the outskirts. Trying to regain a sense of herself as a young adult, rather than the victim everyone painted across her person in a bright as fresh blood red similar to that of those harsh words glaring on her old house. She was growing used to the whispers of the public, having the support of Will and Hannibal oddly comforting though the source of connection their individual relationships stemmed from.

She had felt heavy eyes on her, similar to when the news and Freddie were keeping a closer tab on her, though threatened she did not feel now. She felt vindicated, knowing that she was smarter and quicker on her toes. It was a positive upper hand, one that she knew would end in a manner that would help to ease her sleep as opposed to haunting it.

She took in a deep breath, feeling the crisp air enter her lungs and allowed her face to take on a concerned, almost panicked look. She sent her gaze over her shoulder, and then took an exaggerated sweep of her surroundings before taking quick steps into a trail that lead into the small preserve on the park grounds. Her heart beat quicker despite her plan working when she sensed her follower doing the same.
She suspected that help was already on the way, and she wanted to get to the bench and keep an eye out as quickly and efficiently as possible, not wanting to actively engage in conflict today, but rather let Hannibal and Will take the matters into their own hands.

.:V:.

Will had Hannibal take them to the preserved forest land that doubled as a park in the downtown area, knowing that Abigail had most likely revisited the cafe she had genuinely

enjoyed the last time they had a mid afternoon craving for pastries and caffeine.

“Did you hear about the musician yet?” Will asked as they followed the street the café was on in the direction of the park. He was curious if Hannibal had seen or read it in the news, seeing as he was an avid fan of the local arts scene. They had had many small tiffs about attending such events as the opera or orchestra that Will really felt no need to tag along to.

“I did, as a matter of fact. It is truly a sad time, the man had great talent, though he was so young and such a new addition to the set. The more minute details were left out of the precursory article.”

“Jack thinks it would be a good way to get me back into work, since my lecture the other day went without incident.” The other agents were oddly quiet in regards to call response, and Jack would supervise him if he did agree to take the case.

“You know how I feel about you going back to profiling so soon, despite how quiet things have been regarding our dear friend Franklyn. I trust your judgement, though I may on agree with it.” Hannibal turned the car into the parking lot, his signal quieting as he made the move. The hum of the engine allowed the slight breeze moving through the tall trees take up the quiet of the car between the two men. A rather soothing sound, despite the situation at hand, Will thought as he moved to remove his belt and open the door.

“She should be along the southern reaching path, the second bench is where she goes to read sometimes.” Will moved his hand to brush against the older mans, indicating that he was grateful for the vote of confidence in his sense of work comfort level. He did need to get back to it, having recovered mostly from the stabbing.

The two men walked in silence, Will texting Alana that they were closing in on the young girls whereabouts, that there didn’t seem to be any strange currents in the air of the peaceful park, no signs of the man making so many unwanted appearances in everyone’s lives as of late. The first bench they passed was empty, though there was a scuff of mud splashed from a previous path runner.

Will noticed the calm, reserved manner of the man beside him. Grateful for the even head Hannibal kept upon his shoulders, knowing that there was the potential for such violence and perceived erratic behavior in instances where those he cared about were concerned. Will allowed his hand to brush more completely against his companions, his fingers catching around Hannibal’s. Pulling them a little to close the space between them before letting go.

“My dear Will, did you just attempt to engage in hand holding?” Hannibal smiled over at the focused man, his thoughts leaving the situation at hand for just a moment. “All you need is ask, and I shall consent.”
Genuine affection was shared with a look, before Hannibal frowned. He turned his head toward the figure he spied between the thick foliage. It was a familiar presence, though not that of the suspect they were searching for. Will didn’t seem to share his sense of the figure. The confusion was obvious in the younger man’s gaze, the frown catching him off guard.

“What is it?” The concern he was feeling took over the brief confusion. Embarrassment taking over completely, when he realized he might have stepped over a line.

Hannibal shook his head, his frown turning into a small grin. He took firm hold of Will's hands and pulled the man to him, leaning in and placing a light kiss to his lips.

"Our dear Abigail is waiting for us at the bench just around the corner, let's not keep her waiting." Hannibal could no longer sense the figure among the trees, though he knew he would be encountering them again soon, the threat to him and his own not present, therefore only heeded caution at the time.

"There's no sense of negative focus here, I merely believe it was a minor act of teenage rebellion, her slipping her watch. Let us enjoy the afternoon together, yes?"

How could Will possibly say no to that?

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!